

The Star



Jordan's political, economic and cultural weekly

AMMAN, 4-10 JULY, 1996, VOLUME 7, NUMBER 8, 350 fils

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Popular sectors warn government not to tamper with bread prices

By Raed Al Abed
Star Staff Writer

THE LATEST government plan to increase bread prices by 300 percent has put Jordanians on red alert. Political parties, trade unions, professional associations, the Jordanian Women's Union and other popular institutions united to protest government intentions under the banner of "bread prices is a red line—do not overstep it." This is seen as a clear and forceful message to the government.

The National Society for Consumer Protection (NSCP) also opposed the government's plans, and warned of their negative consequences if they were implemented.

If the government goes ahead with its intention to decrease or do away with subsidies altogether, it risks facing an angry public backlash over an issue that was always left untouched by previous governments.

Early this week Minister of Supply Munir Sobar told *Ad Dastour* Arabic daily of the government's intention to increase the price of bread from 85 fils to 250 fils per kilogram as of 15 July. But the minister later backed down and said the government was only studying the matter. Mr

Sobar told Petra news agency that "the decision to increase bread prices is the prerogative of the prime minister, and no decision has been taken." *Ad Dastour* in turn insisted that it had quoted the minister correctly.

Official sources said the Ministry of Supply was forced to retract Mr Sobar's statement under pressure from Prime Minister Abdel Karim Kabariti, who is worried about public reaction.

But officials say that the government is under pressure to increase bread prices since wheat prices in world markets shot up from \$175 to \$270 per ton. Government subsidies of wheat is estimated at JD 200 per ton. One kilogram of bread costs the Ministry of Supply about 250 fils. Ministry officials maintain that the government will pay the low income JD 15 a year in supply coupons so that they will not suffer as a result of the price hike. "The needy will not feel the increase of bread prices," Sobar said.

The minister explained that "there is 35 to 40 percent of wheat lost by illegal ways or waste." The Ministry of Supply imports 680,000 tons of wheat annually and it subsidized bread prices to the tune of JD 106 million. But ministry officials

maintain that there is also about 280,000 tons of wheat annually that is wasted.

The NSCP strongly rejects the government's intentions. "This increase will negatively affect the nourishment of the people and widen the circle of poverty as 90 percent of people are living in economic crisis," said Dr Mohammad Obiedat, the director of the NSCP.

"I urge the government to study all the alternatives. The excuses that are presented by the government are incorrect."

Those alternatives, Mr Obiedat explained, include putting a stop to the smuggling of wheat outside Jordan, and impose more taxes on cigarettes and alcohol. He said the government should raise the exit tax fee on visitors, and collect immigration fees from the more than 150,000 Arab workers who violate their residence permits.

"One of the NSCP's latest studies shows that grain prices are decreasing and not increasing as the government claims," Dr Obiedat explained. A recent study by the NSCP states that 70 percent of families of seven members and more consume about 2.5 kilograms of bread daily. This would cost an extra JD 77.56 annually, if the price is increased to 250 fils. These families would have to pay JD 228 annu-

ally. The study shows that the waste of wheat is only 14.2 percent.

Economic experts believe that the government is not strong enough to cope with additional burdens, like absorbing the increase in international wheat prices. Farmers in Jordan only produce five percent of local market needs. Economists blame successive government policies for this state of affairs.

While the government denies any relation between the IMF-imposed conditions and the planned floating of bread prices, some experts believe the opposite to be true. The IMF reform program which ends in July 1997 calls for the implementation of three issues: Gradual lifting of subsidies on all goods and eventual removal of all subsidy. Also, the program aims at decreasing the exchange rate of the dinar by 30 percent to make it in parity with the dollar. The third measure is the exemption of foreign goods from customs taxes replacing them with tariffs.

The consumer society has long been urging the government to revive the 'Anti-Trust Laws' and float prices of commodities. The NSCP believes that these regulations will serve the interest of the consumer.

Together with the NSCP, the political

and social institutions demand a national dialogue to discuss the reorganization of the subsidy and those who deserve it.

The executive committee of the Jordanian Women's Union held an emergency meeting to discuss such government plans. In a statement the union, rejects such increases arguing that it will deteriorate the economic situation of the country, and strain the social fabric.

The union urged the government to create a balance between the level of income and the cost of living, by increasing the incomes of people, "to enforce a minimum wage and expand social insurance, and improve public services," the statement said.

The coupons issue has many social connotations. The NSCP says it is degrading



for citizens to queue at the Ministry of Supply and ask for something that is essential for their daily subsistence.

"The policy of the distribution of coupons has many negative social aspects," Obiedat said. "If this mechanism is implemented on bread, which is holy, it would be an insult to the people."

Lifting subsidies on wheat

Government considers bold steps in spite of potential popular protests

By Ahmad Shaker
Special to The Star

IN 1974 the government set up the Ministry of Supply in response to the so-called "sugar crisis." In that year, the merchants hid huge quantities of sugar with the aim of boosting its street price. People called on the government to assume its role in guaranteeing the supply of basic commodities at fair prices.

The Ministry of Supply was founded to import and distribute necessary foodstuff items to citizens at subsidized prices. The ministry also regulated prices of other consumer goods in the local market.

Since that time, the ministry has been importing primary goods such as sugar, rice, wheat and milk for sale to consumers at subsidized prices costing the treasury millions of dinars every year.

The government could afford to do that then. But today as Jordan is committed to an economic adjustment

program in cooperation with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). It has to adhere to deregulation procedures. Among them are: floating prices in general, stopping its intervention in the market in addition to lifting subsidies completely from certain goods.

The final date for such procedures to be implemented is by the end of 1997. Before that, the government will have to create mechanisms and legislations aimed at privatization, handing services corporations to the private sector or operating them on commercial basis.

Such procedures have raised questions about the fate of the Ministry of Supply. Indications are that the ministry is to be phased out to be replaced by a department at the Ministry of Trade and Industry.

However, the government realizes the risks involved in taking such a step for ordinary people, who are used to buy bread at one third of its actual

cost. Over the last three years, the government adopted steps to reduce subsidies on basic goods and compensate low-income people through the controversial coupons system.

Sugar is a good example, where factories and restaurants purchase their needs at market prices, while low-income people still buy it at subsidized prices.

The coupon system applies to families whose monthly income is less than JD 500 (\$700) only. But the distribution system created new problems for the government. Because it was difficult to get accurate information on people's incomes, many families protested when they were denied the right to get coupons.

In addition, the surging world prices of wheat, because of poor harvests and cuts in US subsidies to agricultural exports, forced the government to buy huge supplies at \$275 per ton this year compared to \$170 per ton last year.

Added to this is the fact that at least 300,000 expatriate workers, mostly Egyptians, buy their bread at subsidized prices.

These factors have brought to the forefront the issue of lifting government subsidies on bread while compensating those who will suffer most from the upset in prices. This time, the Ministry of Supply is confident that its new measures will help to identify who deserves subsidy. It asked all departments including the Ministry of Finance, Income Tax Dept., companies and federations to provide it with lists of their employees and their salaries. By this, as sources at the Ministry of Supply said, it can overcome the problem of distributing sugar, rice, and milk through coupons.

Furthermore, the two price system should enable the ministry to achieve profits, by trading with these goods at market price. However, the main problem is the loaf of bread, that is

considered the red line, and which is sold at 85 fils per kilogram, but its actual cost is 250 fils, as studies of the Ministry of Supply claim.

The government perceives this, but poses some questions. Is it committed to offering the loaf of bread for senior merchants and wealthy citizens? Is it committed to supply subsidized bread to tourists, immigrant workers and non-Jordanians? Is the general budget of the country able to provide sufficient subsidy for bread in the light of global high prices?

In short, the government's aim is to reduce its load upon bill which was JD 97 million last year. If world prices continue going up, this means the imports bill will likely to double this year, while the allocated subsidy sum in the budget does not exceed JD 39 million.

Minister of Supply Munir

La solidarité retrouvée des Arabes

A LIRE p. 12 dans LE JOURDAIN

Scorching heat wave in Kingdom

AMMAN (Star)—The heat wave that has affected the Kingdom on Wednesday is expected to continue until Sunday, according to the National Meteorological Dept. Temperatures in Amman and the hilly areas reached a scorching 40 degrees Celsius on Wednesday and are expected to remain high on Thursday and Friday.

The weatherman said the heat wave was caused by a flow of hot air accompanied by a low pressure centering over the Arabian Peninsula. Sources added that the wave will last for three days causing a noticeable rise in temperatures of between six to nine degrees above average for this time of the year. Humidity, on the other hand, will decline.

The heat wave will have a greater effect in the mountainous areas. The weather is likely to be hot and dry and winds will be easterly moderate and dusty specially in the east and south of Kingdom. In Aqaba the weather will be hot and dusty and winds will be northerly moderate and the sea calm.

Weather Outlook

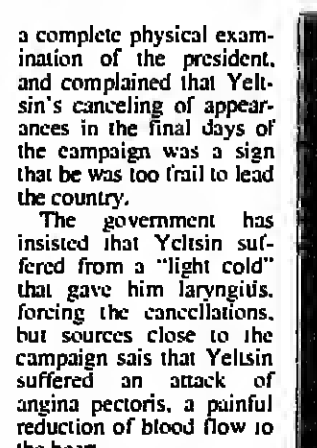
Yeltsin leads in runoff elections amid concerns about his health

MOSCOW (Agencies)—Millions of Russians cast their ballots Wednesday in a tightly contested presidential runoff, amid increasing Western concern about the health of incumbent Boris Yeltsin, who failed to cast his ballot in the media spotlight in Moscow.

Early exit polls indicated that Yeltsin was holding a lead over Communist challenger Gennady Zyuganov, with voter turnout three to four points lower than in the first round of balloting June 16.

But Yeltsin, who has not been seen in public since last week after a very visible cross-country campaign, avoided the assembled reporters waiting for him in Moscow. Instead casting his vote at a small village near his country home at Barvikha, outside the capital.

Zyuganov, who cast his ballot in Moscow, again called for



Yeltsin

a complete physical examination of the president, and complained that Yeltsin's canceling of appearances in the final days of the campaign was a sign that he was too frail to lead the country.

The government has insisted that Yeltsin suffered from a "light cold" that gave him laryngitis, forcing the cancellations, but sources close to the campaign said that Yeltsin suffered an attack of angina pectoris, a painful reduction of blood flow to the heart.

Yeltsin's aides vigorously denied that the president was ill, however, and Russian television aired a clip of Yeltsin voting Wednesday morning. In the clip, Yeltsin spoke clearly, urging Russians to vote, although he

Levy threatens to quit Netanyahu cabinet if Sharon is not appointed

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies)—Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy threatened Wednesday to quit the three-week-old government unless a cabinet post was found for former Defense Minister Ariel Sharon by early next week.

He made his threat while speaking to members of new Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's coalition adding that he will vacate his position before the Israeli leader's trip to Washington Monday.

Levy's surprising statements made in public rather than behind closed doors clearly embarrassed Netanyahu. "I don't conduct negotiations, certainly not on such sensitive



Levy

issues, foreign minister sir, in the presence of television cameras," Netanyahu was quoted as replying angrily.

Levy, Sharon's ally in Likud, had threatened not to join the government but relented when Netanyahu promised to form a new Infrastructure Ministry from parts of existing ministries. Those efforts have stalled as cabinet ministers have been unwilling to part with the duties that would make up a new portfolio for Sharon.

Sharon, ex-general from Netanyahu's Likud party who led Israel into its most unpopular war and battled the United States over Jewish settlements in the past, found himself without a portfolio when Netanyahu's cabinet was sworn in last month.

Cultural mission:

Bringing high art to Olympic masses

By Suzanne Muchnic
LA Times-Washington Post News Service

LOS ANGELES—"Fantastic," said J. Carter Brown, greeting his interviewer as if he couldn't wait to talk about his current projects. Animated enthusiasm and high energy have always been among his strong suits, and in that regard at least, the art world impresario hasn't changed a bit.

At 62, Brown's curly hair may be turning gray, but since stepping down in 1992 as director of the National Gallery of Art in Washington after a 23-year tenure, he seems to be more on-the-scene than ever. As always, his mission is to bring high culture to the people.

He currently devotes most of his time to leading and promoting

powerful review board for the District of Columbia's public art and architecture, and serves as senior adviser to Corbis Corp. founded in 1989 by Microsoft chief Bill Gates to create new uses and markets for digital content.

With Brown's help, Corbis is building a massive digital archive including images of artworks in collections of major museums.

Working in yet another capacity on a recent trip to Los Angeles, Brown fulfilled ceremonial duties as chairman of the jury for the prestigious Pritzker Architecture Prize, awarded this year to Jose Rafael Moneo of Spain.

Brown has so many balls in the air that he seems to be engaged in a precarious juggling act, but he sees his various jobs as a reflection of his lifelong love of all the arts.

"When I was interviewed for the National Gallery, (then-director) John Walker asked me what I wanted to do with my life," Brown said. "I told him I'd like to make an institution a kind of cultural center for its community. ... He said, 'That's great. How would you like to do it for the nation?' So I did. At the National Gallery I wrote some films and got involved



with drama and dance in our outreach programs. The gallery has an assistant director for music and its own orchestra.

"I have always been involved in all those things," Brown said. "But now I feel that I am really doing what I told John Walker I wanted to do. Ovation is bringing all the arts right into people's living rooms."

"Rings," on the other hand,

brings art to a city overrun with sports fans. The \$3.2 million exhibition presents a multicultural array of works in sections devoted to five emotions—love, anguish, awe, triumph and joy. It also has a soundtrack, with "selections of world music that reinforce the emotions of each of the rings," Brown said.

Ranging from pre-Columbian ceramics to a video

Continued on page 2

World Report

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JORDAN

WEEK

An unconventional report on Jordanian news and views edited by Marwan Al Asmar

Moasher meets press

■ Welcome back Dr Moasher. Your weekly meeting with the press was sorely missed. We know that you had more pressing engagements in the past couple of weeks. This week's meeting with local and Arab journalists was full of interesting issues. The Minister of Information talked as expected about the success of the Arab summit that was recently held in Cairo. Jordan's position with regard to Jerusalem, the Jordan-American recent military maneuvers that are held in Azraq, foreign labor, and the press law. Contrary to reports made in the press, Dr Moasher said the government has no intention of carrying out joint



Dr Moasher

military maneuvers with either Israel or Turkey. On a question that relates to the recent killings of three Israeli soldiers, Dr Moasher said that there is no evidence that the group had crossed the Jordan River into the West Bank. He stressed that those people were inside the West Bank when they carried out the attack.

Israelis come to Jordan in droves

■ Tourism is becoming a booming market in Jordan, well at least for the Israelis. The Jordan-Israeli peace treaty of October 1994 meant all systems go. Jordan's ambassador in Tel Aviv, Mr Omar Rifai said his embassy issued over 120,000 visas to Israeli tourists in 1995. The number of Israeli tourists visiting Jordan is 10 times as much as Jordanian tourists visiting Israel. And the flow is still continuing. The ambassador says that about 10,000 Israeli tourists visit Jordan every month. Israelis made up 12 percent of the one million tourists that visited Jordan in 1995. However, it is sug-

gested that Israelis make very bad tourists. With their sandwiches, so to speak, they enter the country from the crossing points in the north, go down to Aqaba and quietly slip back into Eilat where they spend the rest of their holidays. As far as Jordanians are concerned, Mr Rifai said that only 11,000 Jordanians visited Israel since the peace treaty was signed. But this figure is likely to shoot up in time as the growing queue outside the Israeli embassy in Amman confirms. But these people are not really looking for holidays but for employment.

IAF deputies warn government over bread

■ The Islamic Action Front (IAF) deputies of the Lower House of parliament warned the government not to increase the price of bread. In a statement released on Saturday, the deputies considered the issue of bread a red line which the government must not overstep.

They called on the government to find other alternatives for lifting the subsidies on bread such as reducing the number of travels by cabinet members, and putting an end to the excessive spending by the government. The deputies asked the government to crack down on people who are involved in corruption. The statement pointed out that people are suffering under a deteriorating economic situation in the country.

Newspapers for the taking

■ It's newspaper galore this week. What's known for sure is that every now and then somebody plucks up courage and decides to take the plunge and issue a new low budget and low fat newspaper. As if we don't have enough, a new Arabic weekly newspaper will

soon be on the newsstands. Called *Sawt Al Arab*, it will be published by Al Khoharad Al Arab Co., and the chief editor is Ali Othman, who comes from *Sawt Al Mar'a* weekly. Contrary to its serious name, *Sawt Al Arab* will also deal in social affairs. Since we have not seen it yet, we can't tell whether it will follow the sensationalist trend or not. But apparently, this is not enough. The Council of Ministers has also agreed to grant a license to another weekly titled *Al Daboor*. Its chief editor is Mousa Hawawdeh, the effervescent journalist in *Ad Dustour*. Shortly before that, another weekly appeared called *Al Taqrir*. Its chief editor is Maher Abu Teyr. The quest for intellectualism does not seem to end. The Jordanian market is saturated with weeklies. Just who reads them is anybody's guess.

JPA to hold election Friday

■ It's all set to go. The date for accepting nominations to the elections for Jordan's Press Association is now closed.

Journalists from all over the country will congregate this Friday, 5 July to elect a new president for the JPA along with a new council. Five candidates are standing for the presidency. They are Seif Al Sharif, Salah Al Shboul, Faisal Al Shboul, Bassem Sakejha and Khalid Mahadin. About 18 candidates will be standing for the nine-member council. These include three seats for the owners of



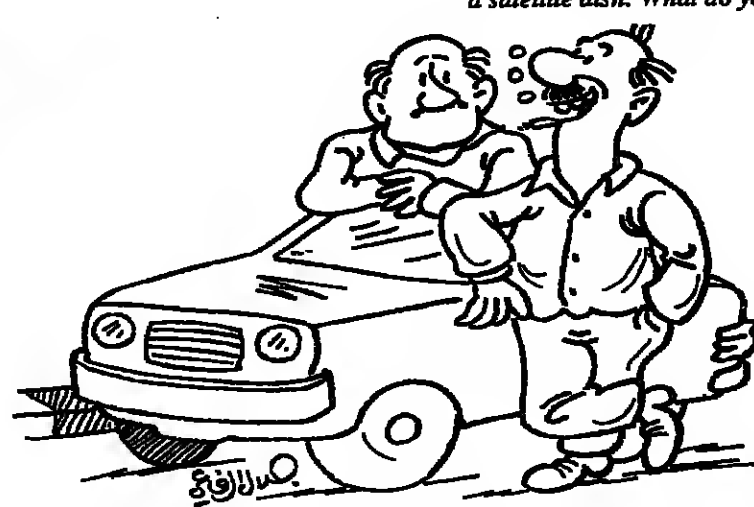
Al Sharif

newspapers, three for editors and the last three for the Petra news agency.

The low-income gets a hearing

■ At last, the Ministry of Social Development seems to have cash to spare. It is now prepared to finance small scale projects that include handicrafts for those with limited income. It has issued specific directives to its offices throughout the country to accept applications for projects from ordinary citizens. The Minister of Social Development, Mr Hamud Abu Jamous said the purpose of this is to combat poverty and unemployment.

I am thinking of decorating my car with a satellite dish. What do you say?



Jamil Rifai/Ad Dustour

Obeidat calls for new movement

■ Despite the lack of enthusiasm about political parties, Mr Ahmed Obeidat is well on the way to form a new political movement. According to *Al Majd*, the National Jordanian Front is a loose coalition designed to coordinate between political parties, trade unions and different political and cultural societies.

His idea is not a new one. The former Prime Minister and ex-Senator in the Upper House of Parliament says that meetings with over 90 leading personalities have been taking place about the formation of such a front for the last year.

He said the front reflects the views of those who believe in the independence of Jordan, and in its national will, and its Arab and Islamic character, taking into account that it's part and parcel of the Arab nation. The front objectives in this respect is to guard against Arab divisions and to act as a vanguard against Israeli hegemony, which is calling for a new Middle East order, away from Arab political, economic and cultural institutions.



Obeidat

Korea's products on display

■ The Korean Products Show '96 will start on Monday 8 July. Organized by the Korea Trade Center, in coordination with the Universal Expo Center, it is held under the patronage of the Ambassador of the Republic of Korea in Amman, Mr Jung Il Oh. The show, which is held at the Universal Expo Center on university Road, will last till 14 July.

On display will be the latest products produced by Korean industry. These include some of the hi-tech equipments that the country is making.



Mr Il Oh

A romp in the Ministry of Interior

■ A very disturbing piece of news appeared in *Al Taqrir* weekly. It suggests that the government accepted up to \$70 million dollars for the 1993 Lower House election campaign. Employees of the Ministry of Interior were promised that they would receive a large bonus if they worked during the campaign. However, the weekly pointed out that the employees received meager amounts and recently have decided to blow the lid wide open. The employees have started sending letters to deputies whom it is hoped would be sent to the Prime Minister, Abdul Karim Al Kabariti. The employees are angry. A number of employees, the paper said, worked for five months prior to the election and all they received was JD 39. In addition to that, some employees worked for a 20-day period and some were on electoral committees but all they received was JD 43, some even got as low as JD 26. The workers protested to the heads of the electoral constituencies but the reply they received was "that this was for a national cause." *Al Taqrir* stresses that the \$70 million could not be verified.

Levy threatens to quit Netanyahu cabinet if Sharon is not appointed

Continued from page 1

He had wanted to be finance minister or defense minister. But he has not always been on the best of terms with Netanyahu. When in 1994 Sharon launched a brief run for prime minister, Netanyahu called him "a permanent subversive."

Sharon has had little to say about the affair—except that he would welcome the chance to head a specially created Ministry of Infrastructure.

He was instrumental in getting Netanyahu elected by persuading Levy to forge an alliance with the Likud leader rather than run against him for prime minister.

Meanwhile, Netanyahu appeared to distance his government from the idea of separation, a notion which was embraced by the Labor government and which has been

promoted by his own Internal Security Minister Avigdor Kahalani. The Jerusalem Post reported Wednesday.

When asked pointedly at a session with the Foreign Press Association whether he wanted to continue the policy of building fences between Israel and the territories, Netanyahu replied: "We are not committed to that line of thinking. I would like to envision, in a future settlement, an open arrangement that these are not sealed entities that do not live and breathe and interact with each other. I think this is not the prescription for peace that I would like to see."

Netanyahu emphasized Palestinian economic progress as the key, saying he believes this could come about best through open areas. "I think the economic component to peace could be very beneficial

and stabilizing and good from a human point of view. I would like, as far as possible, to express that arrangement in the policies of openness between the Palestinian autonomy and Israel," the newspaper quoted the Israeli leader.

The notion of separation was strongly favored by the late prime minister Yitzhak Rabin, and supported in a report that emerged from an interministerial panel chaired by then-internal security minister Moshe Shahal.

The idea, however, was opposed by former prime minister Shimon Peres, ostensibly on the same economic grounds put forward by Netanyahu.

However, Peres changed his mind and announced his support for separation after the spate of four suicide bombings earlier this year. ■

Bringing high art to Olympic masses

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(Mother With Dead Child) and an Indian figure, "Siva as Lord of the Dance (Nataraj)." The J. Paul Getty Museum has contributed a Greek vessel, "Panathenaic Prize Amphora," and a Cycladic sculpture, "Seated Male Figure With Harp."

The show has been criticized for being politically correct, mixing major and minor artworks, organizing an according to emotions and transporting fragile treasures to a public spectacle. But "Rings" also has defenders.

Robert Rosenblum, a professor at New York University's Institute of Fine Arts, said he discovered "a whole new bag of tricks and surprising sequences" when he lectured on the exhibition at the High Museum in April. "I don't want to live in this world of five emotions forever," he said. But considering the artworks in a new context was refreshing, he

staid. "Although I really can't speak about the show without seeing it, the table of contents is staggering in terms of the international grandeur and quality of the objects. Rosenblum said, "Carter is probably the only person with the power to pull this off. I can't think of any other ex-director or now-director who has the cachet to have gotten these loans. It seems like a once-in-a-century opportunity to put together—on a slightly shaky premise—all these masterpieces, and I don't see why not."

"I suspect a lot of people will be very grumpy about it. It seems like a show without a point—we've been calling it Carter's live-ring circus—but it does have a point. It's not often that we can see all these major artworks together," Rosenblum said.

Brown has heard all the complaints. "The show is going to stretch people," he said. "You really have to put

behind you all your knee-jerk preconceptions about what an art exhibition is up to. So many of them are driven by bringing together things that are as nearly alike as possible to study them and show the differences."

"This purposely goes 180 degrees the other way. It combines stuff that's as disparate as possible to see if the emotions they were chosen to evoke can bring a unity out of all this diversity. So, it's high risk, but I think the reward is commensurate because a lot of people haven't really remembered why this stuff was created in the first place."

If Brown's personal wishes come true, the exhibition will not only be viewed as a watershed, it will have a second life as a program on Ovation. If so, "Rings" will join a repertoire that includes "Modern Painters," a Santa Fe Opera production based on the life of Victorian art critic and social reformer John Ruskin, and "Distant Echoes: Yo-Yo Ma and the Kalahari Bushmen," a documentary of the celebrated cellist's exploration of South African music.

"All the arts, all the time" is how Brown describes the new network. The brainchild of Harold E. Morse, who founded

the Learning Channel in 1980, Ovation was launched on 12 April as the only television network dedicated exclusively to the visual and performing arts. Brown joined Morse as a co-founder of Ovation in 1992.

A shortage of available cable channels has severely limited Ovation's distribution, but the network is positioned to reach a broader audience when new technology is available, Brown says. The first break is expected in about a year.

"There are these set-top boxes being manufactured now that will digitize the signal and allow digital compression," said Brown, "which basically gives you eight channels for every channel you get now."

Despite reports on the graying of the arts audience, he contends that more Americans attend art events than sport events. "The market is there. Study after study shows this. Polls that talk to parents about what they want their kids exposed to get an almost universal response—96 percent or something—that they want them exposed to the arts and humanities. So far, they are not getting a lot of it, but the dream of Ovation is to be there for the channel-surfers," he said. ■

Government of Jordan Invitation for Expression of Interest

Jordan Investment Corporation (JIC) and Jordan Export Development and Commercial Centers Corporation are planning to establish (set-up) a Jordanian fair under the name "Jordan International Fair."

The main objective for establishing this Fair is to provide facilities to accommodate local, regional and international exhibition that take place in Jordan. In addition facilities would be provided for delivering lectures, conducting meetings... etc.

The site for the Fair has been chosen 10 km South-West of Amman, close in the highway leading to Queen Alia International Airport. The 230,000 m² site is already provided with the required infrastructure (water, electricity, roads, and telephone lines).

It is proposed that the Fair facilities would include the following:

- * Exhibition Halls.
- * Meeting Rooms.
- * Storage Rooms.
- * Fast Food Restaurants.
- * Rest Rooms.
- * Car Parking.

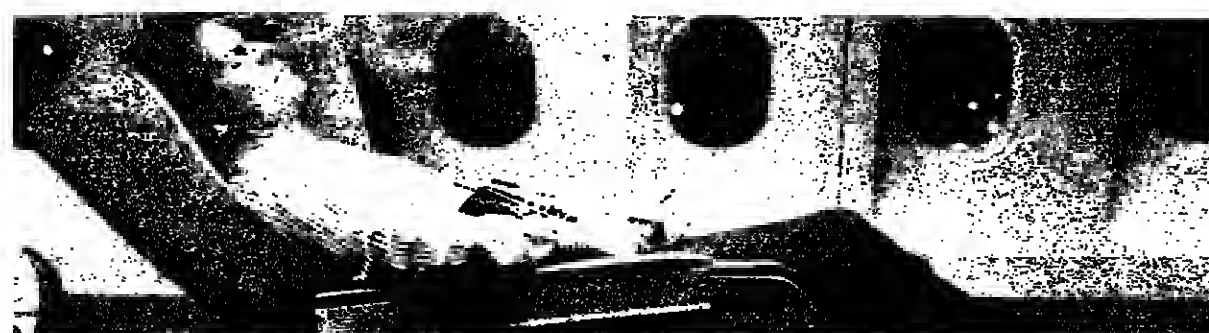
This project is based on a Build, Own and Operate or Build, own and transfer approach. As such, companies with experience in setting-up, holding and operating similar ventures are cordially invited to submit their expressions of interest, along with a profile of the company's experience in similar projects, not later than 30 July 1995 to:

Eng. M. Batayneh
Director General

Jordan Investment Corporation
P.O. Box 3294
Amman-Jordan
Fax No. 962 8 816915

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Beijing and Tokyo

Government takes bold steps

Continued from page 1

Sobar says that there is considerable waste in bread consumption in Jordan valued at 35 percent of total food imports.

He said Jordan's imports of wheat reach 680,000 tons annually, compared to only 400,000 tons imported by Lebanon. He estimated the size of waste at 280,000 tons of imported wheat, as the consumption of the Jordanian individual rises to 115 kilograms of bread per year.

The National Society for Consumer Protection estimates the waste in bread consumption at 30 percent as citizens buy more than their actual needs.

The government said there is need to take up bold procedures in spite of people's protest. Mr Sobar said that a working group had already started a study to adopt a suitable resolution. Initially, the government plans to raise bread prices to their cost level, as well as compensate citizens who are provided with coupons. Those eligible for subsidy will receive JD 15 per family member in cash or coupons.

Mr Sobar added that the government may also consider raising the price of bread to 150 fils per kilo, without compensating citizens.

A final government decision is expected to be made by mid-July.

Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti assured citizens that the government is studying all options to provide subsidy for those who need it.

Further regulations covering tourists, immigrants and poultry farmers, who form a big burden on the country's budget estimated at 30 percent of total bread subsidy, are expected. Mr Kabariti disclosed.

But government justifications for the 300 percent hike in bread prices has been rejected by the public. Members of the Islamic Action Front issued a statement expressing their opposition to the government's plan. In their memo, the Islamist deputies said "we don't believe the solution is to increase bread prices, the government has to look for another way to fill the gaps." They added that the government plan crosses the red line, and suggested other ways to reduce burden on the state treasury such as putting an end to what they called extravagance or excessive expenditure by the government and fight against financial and administrative corruption.

"This government can provide subsidy to its beneficiaries in other forms by increasing income tax on citizens with high incomes and imposing fees on tourists and foreign laborers to cover the cost of subsidized bread," the Islamist deputies maintained.

The deputies added that the government can put strict punishment against those who use subsidized bread as fodder.

They also warned against using the coupon system, claiming that the system had failed in earlier experiences. The National Society for Consumer Protection also rejected government plans, considering tampering with the price of bread as a red line that must not be crossed. It issued a declaration saying that this is playing with fire and called popular federations to protest this step because it leads to new and great increase in the cost of living.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Supply has recently allowed the private sector to import basic foodstuff articles, the importation of which was restricted to the ministry.

By the beginning of 1998, the ministry hopes to float prices of all foodstuffs leaving it to the private sector to buy and market all goods including wheat, sugar, rice and milk.

Parliament, which is preparing for an extraordinary session, will have an opinion on this issue, but some deputies will be under pressure to back the government since general elections are due in the first half of next year. ■

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Government takes bold steps

Continued from p. 1
Sobor says that there is considerable work to be done in the area of food imports.
He said Jordan's consumption of wheat is 1.5 million tons annually, of which 400,000 tons are imported. He said the size of wheat imports is expected to increase to 1.15 million tons in 1996.
The National Consumer Protection Commission estimates the average consumption of wheat is 30 kg per capita per year. The government is expected to increase this to 35 kg per capita per year.
A final government decision is expected to be made by mid-July.

People & Politics



A matter of life and bread

The cat is out of the bag, or is it? The government has reached the crossroads that every prime minister in a developing country faces: the most: lifting subsidies on basic foodstuffs especially bread.
The challenge has been turned down by every prime minister in the last decade. Will Prime Minister Abdel Karim Kabariti be any different? Will he dare end bread subsidies and face public outrage? Such a decision, which the government appears to be contemplating, is never a popular one. Bread riots are not uncommon in the Arab world's poorer countries such as Egypt, Lebanon, Tunisia and Morocco. Many governments had lived to regret taking such a decision and many did not live long soon after.



Kabariti

The issue is a political bombshell and parties, unions and consumer organizations rarely miss the opportunity to use the occasion as a rallying point for the government in charge.
In the barrage of public statements on the issue, one is bound to feel sympathy for the low-income people who will be most affected by the hike in bread prices. Many doubt that government measures to cushion low-income Jordanians against such an increase will ever work and point to previous experiences.

Mr. Kabariti's timing could not have been worse. It is no secret that the economy has not been at its best for some time and 1996 is being described by business people as a recession year. Incomes have not been increasing and the cost of living is still on the rise affecting people across the board. The government is under obligation to terminate all subsidies as part of the economic adjustment program. The IMF's bitter medicine has been administered for more than six years now, but Jordanians are yet to see the fruits of the shock treatment.
One question to ask is can one separate the economic justifications for lifting subsidies on essential stuff from the political scoreboards. Mr. Kabariti must realize that if he decides to end subsidies he will be gambling away any reserve of popularity that his government may still have.

And if public reaction gets out of control, God forbid, he might have to step down in disgrace. There are precedents and the most recent one is when Prime Minister Zaid Rifai's government miscalculated the effects of its decision to hike the price of fuel oil in April 1989 which spurred riots in Ma'an and elsewhere. That was the end of the Rifai government.

But something good came out of that incident after all. The riots and the ousting of Mr. Rifai paved the way for a comprehensive political reform culminating in the holding of general parliamentary elections in November of that year. At the time, political observers made fun of the fact that Jordanians wanted bread but were given democracy instead.

But today, the circumstances have changed. In more than one way, Jordanians are under pressure. Incomes in real terms are dwindling while the cost of living is still on its way up, unemployment is still a serious problem especially among the young—some Jordanians have not worked for a living for more than five years. We hear and echo complaints, but we don't see any riots.

Could a rise in the price of bread be the straw that breaks the camel's back? Very likely. No matter how strong the government's justifications are, the timing of the decision is wrong. And no matter what measures the government adopts to lessen the effects of price rises on the underprivileged, the political shrapnel of this bombshell will fly in all directions.

We hope Mr. Kabariti's advisors will see beyond their noses and calculators and advise against toying with the price of bread at this time. It's already a hot summer and people's capacity to be tolerant in such a heat is likely to be a short circuit.



Prime Minister Kabariti meets Mahmoud Abbas, member of the executive committee and head of the negotiations department in the PLO at the Prime Ministry, Tuesday. Mr. Abbas is making preliminary preparations for Mr. Arafat's visit to Jordan that is due to start this Saturday. Mr. Arafat will meet His Majesty King Hussein and other top Jordanian officials.

Netanyahu, tough man of Likud 'We would designate security and settlement zones alongside the autonomous areas'

EDITOR'S NOTE: Last week, newly elected Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu put on a hard-line display during a news conference with US Secretary of State Warren Christopher, renewing concern about the future of the Arab-Israeli peace process. But a few days before his talks with Christopher, Netanyahu showed more flexibility in an interview with Washington Post columnist Lally Weymouth, who was on assignment for Newsweek. Smoking a cigar in the prime minister's office only recently vacated by Shimon Peres, Netanyahu appeared relaxed and comfortable. "I told you I'd get here," he told Weymouth. Excerpts of the interview follow:



Will you meet with PLO President Yasser Arafat when and where?

First of all, we already have had contacts. One of the first contacts I asked to have made right after the results of the election were made known. It was a phone call from Dore Gold (this political adviser to Arafat's deputy, Abu Mazin (Mahmoud Abbas)). That was not an accident. It was made to convey to the Palestinian Authority and its leadership that we are not breaking channels and intend to pursue a dialogue. Since then, there have been other contacts and those will undoubtedly grow with frequency.

But do you plan to involve yourself?

I've said if I deem it important for Israel's security and interests that I will meet with Arafat. I will not rule it out.

Do you think the deal with the Palestinian Liberation Organization is irreversible?

What I said is that governments keep commitments and we expect the same from the other parties, foremost from the Palestinians. So far, what we have agreed upon are Oslo I and Oslo II agreements worked out in talks in Oslo, and we are prepared to negotiate further, including a final settlement with the Palestinian Authority—providing it keeps its obligations.

I heard that you were impressed by the results of the cooperation between the security forces—the Palestinian Authority force and that of Israel.

What is clear from the experience of the last few months—since the spate of bombings in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv—is that the Palestinian Authority has the clear ability to control terrorism and to prevent attacks against Israel. This is what we expect them to do—to discharge their obligations. We reserve, of course, the right to

right now. It is not an easy task.

The overwhelming part of the city would remain under Arab administration—it would come under the administration of the Palestinian Authority.

How can you make peace with Syria if you're not willing to trade land?

Our view is that the only reason we've had non-belligerency with Syria is because we have had defensive positions on the Golan Heights. When the Syrians were on the Golan Heights, we didn't have peace. We had war. In '48 they had the Golan Heights as well as in '67. It was only when the option for war became more difficult—when Israel assumed a commanding position on the Golan Heights—that this produced tranquility on that front.

We need to build confidence between (Israel and Syria), we need to develop trust, and I have a number of ideas how to do that with the Syrians which I'll explore in the coming months.

Are you interested in achieving peace with Syria?

I'm interested in getting a Syrian-Israeli peace, but not on the terms of our withdrawal from the Golan, which I think would produce a short-term celebration but a long-term danger to our ability to defend the north of the country.

Do you think that President Assad of Syria will be interested in peace on these terms?

If for domestic or other reasons there's no readiness on the Syrian side for full normalization between Syria and Israel—something all Israeli governments want—then we have to look at other possibilities. I believe that there are areas that should be explored—if there's a willingness to engage in discreet dialogue.

Are you talking about establishing a direct Israeli-Syrian dialogue?

Yes, a direct dialogue. ■

Point of order

Claudia makes the beat with social consequences

My fingers have long been itching to write about something exciting. No, it is not the prices of bread that have dominated the news for the last couple of weeks, but would you believe it, it is the current Al Fuhais Art Festival.

In an attempt to be one up on the Jerash festival that is due to start towards the end of this month, the organizers in Al Fuhais have sought to go all the way by introducing what they say is the best in Arabic music.

However, what the management did not bargain for was the organization of the events. To put it mildly, it proved the pits. Claudia Al Shamali's concert last Monday, was the ultimate in disorganization with police on stand by waiting to brance on the many spectators that tried to force their way in. Men, women, young and old were all waiting at the gates wishing to catch a glimpse of that radiant Lebanese singer.

People were falling on top of each other. At one point, a woman carrying a child fell backwards. But did she want to leave afterwards, no. Clutching her husband, she said "wait let's stay." It was only after much pleading that it was dangerous to stay that she relented. But it was near riot, because of the crowd that was assembled in a close area. With pushing and shoving, the people swerved forth with police trying to contain them. The police did not either bargain for such a large crowd and were limited in number. And all that was at the gate before the concert started, would you believe!

As Claudia made her debut, the packed hall went into a frenzy. But this is not an audience that could be controlled. Somebody said it was like a football match, with people shouting and cheering. In fact they were rioting. At one point, the electricity pole was shaking. If it fell down, it would have injured many people. But did they control themselves, no. In the end, the organizers had to stop the concert half an hour before schedule.

Is there a moral to this tale, I might ask? With the festival's season starting in earnest this month, are we likely to see more scenes like this, well, maybe. What is for sure is that this is a new social phenomena in Jordan, that is likely to stay with us for a long time.

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Phobia in Tawjihi ends for long wait of results

Omar Al Haj Eid
Special to The Star

"THANK GOODNESS, it's all over," you could hear pupils muttering as they finish their Tawjihi exams earlier this week. Sitting for the Tawjihi is a nerve-racking experience for many students. It is a critical period and many regard it as a make or break time since it is a major factor for deciding which career to pursue, and which university or college is available. The Tawjihi will either open doors for many or close them. Moreover, the exams are a major worry for the parents of students.

It was a frightening experience," Sami Ajouri, a student at the Sweileh Secondary Boys School, told The Star. "As I received the paper and began to answer the questions, I became more relaxed," he added. He thought that the first part of the exam was a little bit difficult, but on the whole Sami thought he did well.

Another student in the same school had a different reaction. He entered the exam hall feeling full of confidence. "I studied well for the exam and wasn't at all frightened," he added.

Pupils felt boyent in other areas. Manal Abdallah of the Al Qusour Secondary Girls School, said that the exam was definite, clear and comprehensive. Despite this, she did say that she was a little worried about the outcome.

Parents on the other hand sometimes play a crucial role in increasing students worry and discomfort. Questions and comments such as how did you do in the exam, what about the

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Our Say...

Land for peace is a base for peace

ISRAELI PRIME Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's recent statement that the land-for-peace formula could not be a basis for peace in the Middle East undermines hopes that the new Israeli government will honor commitments made by its predecessors and that it will move forward towards a comprehensive solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Mr Netanyahu's position was made few days after leaders of the world's industrialized nations, meeting in France, reaffirmed the principle of land for peace in their summit statement. The Arab leaders meeting in Cairo a week before also made it clear that the formula, which Israel accepted in Madrid, was still the cornerstone for peace in the region.

The G-7 summit position must not be taken lightly by Israel. Mr Netanyahu risks isolating Israel if he chooses to squander an opportunity to make peace with the Arab world and guarantee Israel's security.

But since his election, Mr Netanyahu has been repeating his objection to the principle of trading land with Israel's neighbors. He says that Israel has already given away too much and that it will be compromising its security if it gives any more especially when it comes to the Golan.

Mr Netanyahu's gamble will not work. Because his peace for peace proposal serves only Israel's interest and leaves other parties out. Mr Netanyahu must not forget that the land Israel will be trading is occupied territory. It is not Israel's to start with. Land is the core of the Middle East conflict and the absence of this important factor from any peace proposal will automatically condemn it to failure.

Israel is now committed, both legally and morally, to honor its obligations under peace treaties and agreements. Israel cannot afford to turn back the clock and suck the region into an era of cold war politics. No single party has an interest in that, not the Americans, not the Europeans and certainly not the Arabs.

To disengage from the peace process remains an option for Mr Netanyahu in spite of his assurances that his government wants peace. But can he afford to do that?

The Arabs must not allow Mr Netanyahu's statements to dispel their efforts to put forward an Arab strategy to deal with changing realities in the region. To start with, they should allow some initial dialogue to go on with the new Israeli government, but only to understand the true position of the Israeli leadership on withdrawal from Palestinian lands, the final status negotiations with the PNA, the right of self-determination for the Palestinian people and the rights of refugees and the displaced and Israel's withdrawal from Syrian and Lebanese occupied territories.

Netanyahu must understand that he risks destroying all of Israel's achievements in the past four to five years if he chooses to walk away from Israel's obligations to peace. He must understand that peace has a price and that continuing Israel's occupation of Arab land cannot continue if peace is to have a chance in the Middle East. ■



● US President Bill Clinton smiles for the cameras. He is joined by French President Jacques Chirac (center) and German Chancellor Helmut Kohl at a press conference concluding the G7 economic summit in Lyon. The summit reaffirmed the land for peace formula for a comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

The Star

Jordan's political, economic and cultural weekly

An independent political, economic and cultural weekly, published every Thursday in Amman by Media Services International (Info-Media).
Editorial & Advertising: Telephones 652-380, 645-380, Fax 648-298,
P.O. Box 9313, Postal Code 11191 Amman - Jordan, email: Star@nets.com.jo

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Member of The International Advertising Association

Subscriptions: (annual) Jordan JD 20, Arab countries US\$ 100, W. Europe US\$ 200, USA & Canada US\$ 200.
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Arab violence

Who are the real victims?

But what is less well reported by the US media is the Israeli terrorism that has been heaped upon the Arabs—Palestinians in particular—since the founding of Israel

Robert W. McGee

POLITICIANS ARE QUICK to condemn Arab terrorism like the 1983 attack that killed 241 US servicemen in Beirut, Lebanon, the Oklahoma City bombing (which turned out not to be Arab terrorists), the World Trade Center bombing and the Saudi Arabian bombing that killed or injured hundreds of people.

The press is eager to devote substantial coverage to such events as well. But the big question—the one that neither politicians nor the press addresses—is "why do some Arabs engage in such activities?"

Why are they willing to engage in suicide attacks and bombings and why do they seem to single out the United States (as well as Israel) as the target of their attacks? What is the problem that makes them willing to die for their cause?

Anyone who pays any attention to the news knows that the US has been the strongest supporter of Israel since its founding in the 1940s, and that various Arab states have, at one time or another, been enemies of Israel. But what is less well reported by the US media is the Israeli terrorism that has been heaped upon the Arabs—Palestinians in particular—since the founding of Israel.

The Palestinian "problem" stems from the fact that Israel was established on Palestinian land. During the 1948 war, the Israeli forces not only drove the Palestinians from their homes, but also made a point of dismantling more than 400 Palestinian villages, towns and cities stone by stone, so that the Palestinians would have nothing to return to. As a result, three million of the estimated six million total Palestinian population are refugees, a million of whom are forced to this day to live in appalling conditions in refugee camps with little hope for the future.

The Palestinians' property rights—one of the most basic of all human rights—was systematically disparaged. This disparagement continues to this day, as evidenced by the West Bank settlement policies of the present Israeli government. Russian Jews and others are being given Palestinian land to live on, and the Palestinian owners are being driven from their land without compensation. Whole Palestinian neighborhoods in East Jerusalem have been confiscated.

The land grab is only one of many human rights abuses that the Palestinians have had to endure. Palestinians are subject to searches at numerous check points in their own country. Their homes can be blown up without due process if a family member is merely accused of terrorist activity. There have been systematic attempts to prevent Palestinians from getting an education, as evidenced by the closing of Palestinian schools.

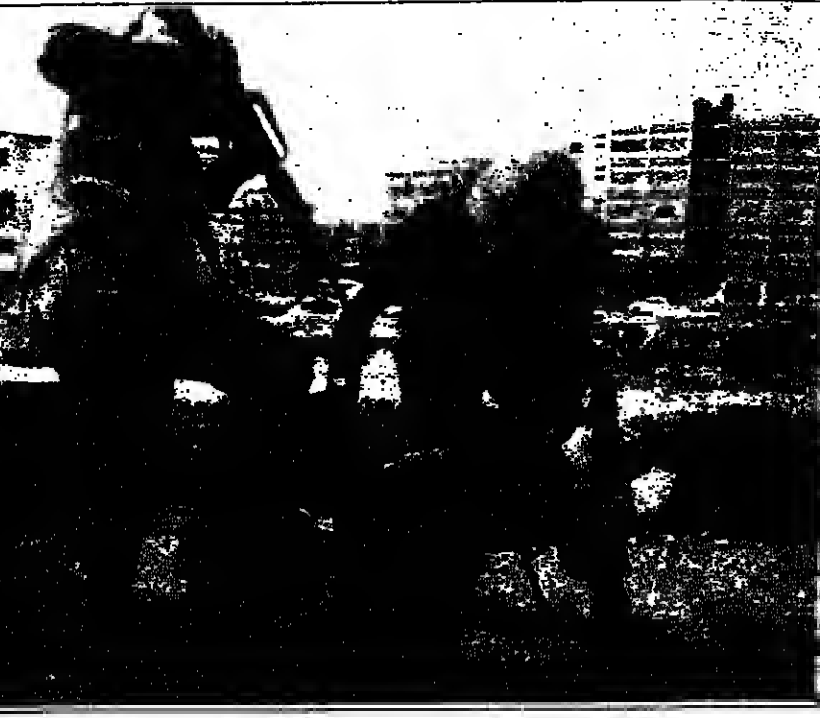
Beatings, torture, imprisonment and even killings of Palestinians have become commonplace. Palestinian farmers have systematically been deprived of water for their farms, while Israeli farmers get what they need. Freedom of travel has been restricted or denied on numerous occasions, making it difficult or impossible to visit family or go to work, thus causing economic hardship. Christian and Moslem Palestinians who live in the West Bank and Gaza have been prevented from worshipping at Jerusalem's religious sites for "security" reasons.

Palestinian merchants who sell watermelons in the local market have been beaten because they sliced open

the watermelons, thus revealing the colors of the Palestinian flag, which was forbidden at the time. Palestinians have also been beaten for wearing shirts that are the colors of the Palestinian flag. During the recent election, right-wing Israeli party posters placed in front of polling places falsely warned Palestinians that their health and pension benefits would be taken away if they voted, thus greatly reducing the number of Palestinians who dared to vote. Some of those who tried to vote were beaten by police.

One young Palestinian was beaten by about 40 Israeli police in front of James Moran, a member of the US Congress. Bystanders said this sort of thing happens all the time. Between the start of the intifada in 1987 and mid-1995, more than 1400 Palestinians have been killed, including 260 children.

The American press devotes little or no space to these Palestinian murders, yet never fails to cover a story involving the death of one or two Israeli soldiers. US press coverage is biased and pro-Israeli. But that is not the reason why some Arabs want to blow up Americans and American property. One of the main reasons these Arabs are outraged is because the US government has been the strongest supporter of Israel right from the start. Sirhan Sirhan, the Arab who assassinated Robert Kennedy, said he did it because Senator



It is still the old way, Israeli soldiers continue to beat Palestinians even in this age of peace

tionally do only those things that are specifically enumerated in the constitution. The constitution says nothing about foreign aid, which makes it constitutionally suspect. Those who favor foreign aid programs might argue that, giving foreign aid is in the best interest of the United States.

But even if that were sometimes the case, it does not follow that such foreign aid programs can become constitutional just because they might be in America's best interest. Besides, the

abuses the human rights of a targeted ethnic group. Human rights are human rights, and no government should ever condone or financially support a regime that systematically disposes of them. Once US support stops, Arab terrorists (some of whom may legitimately be called freedom fighters) will be far less likely to attack US property and citizens.

Although some Arabs hate the United States because of its support of Israel, that is not the only reason why some Arabs are angry with the US.

Historically, various US governments have had a policy of supporting corrupt regimes. We supported the Shah of Iran. We supported a fascist South Vietnamese dictator who was fighting a communist North Vietnamese dictator. We supported Stalin's enslavement of millions of East Europeans. We supported Ferdinand Marcos in the Philippines when it was fashionable to do so. During the Gulf war we came to the aid of a family of dictators in Kuwait who were being attacked by an Iraqi dictator. American soldiers were summoned to a Kuwaiti prince's house to reinstall the gold plumbing that had been stolen by Iraqi soldiers, which is hardly a legitimate use of American troops. We have supported a number of corrupt regimes in Arab countries over the years because American leaders thought it was in the best interests of the United States to do so. Aside from the fact that it is seldom in anyone's best interests to support corrupt regimes, it is also a morally bankrupt policy, and the Arabs recognize that fact.

A third reason why some Arabs dislike the United States, and the West in general, goes back to the Crusades. While I was preparing this article, an Arab friend of mine pointed out that Muslims still have not forgotten the Crusades, the aims of which were to capture holy sites and either kill or convert Muslims. Although the United States was not to blame for the Crusades, which ended hundreds of years before America came into existence as a political entity, Arabs are still suffering psychologically from that experience. ■

This article was written for the US-based Dumont Institute for Public Policy Research.

US taxpayers have been forced to support this land grab, and the many human rights abuses that have gone with it, since the 1940s. For the 1996 fiscal year alone, American taxpayers had to pay more than \$5.5 billion for various kinds of aid to Israel—\$1,375 for every Jewish man, woman and child (Palestinians don't get the benefit of the aid).

Kennedy approved the sale of military aircraft to Israel, which would be used to kill Palestinians. While the Holocaust was a tragedy, and while practically everyone agrees that systematic extermination of an ethnic or religious group cannot be condoned, it does not follow that the survivors of that group have some inherent right to found a country on someone else's land.

US taxpayers have been forced to support this land grab, and the many human rights abuses that have gone with it, since the 1940s. For the 1996 fiscal year alone, American taxpayers had to pay more than \$5.5 billion for various kinds of aid to Israel—\$1,375 for every Jewish man, woman and child (Palestinians don't get the benefit of the aid). Yet Israel cannot be called a poor country. It has a per capita gross domestic product approaching that of England.

The whole issue of foreign aid needs to be addressed. The US constitution provides for a government of limited powers. The government can constitu-

"best interests" argument does not seem to apply to Israel, a country that has received nearly \$78 billion in foreign aid from the United States between fiscal 1948 and 1996. At least part of the military aid Israel receives is used to abuse the human rights of Palestinians. The nonmilitary aid is used to support an economic system that is basically socialist. How can it be in the interest of the United States to support such a regime?

American taxpayers are being abused by being forced to support Israeli terrorism and socialism. At the very least, the foreign aid spigot should be turned off, the sooner the better. In addition, those politicians who have the courage should speak out against the human rights abuses that have been perpetrated against the Palestinian people. Even if one concedes that the US has some strategic interest in Israel (I do not concede this point), it does not follow that American taxpayers should be forced to support a corrupt regime that systematically

Lebed:

Trojan horse in Russian election

By Mikhail Gorbachev

MOSCOW—The curtain rises this week on the dimly lit stage. The audience sits anxiously in their seats, uneasy about the two prominent players reciting their lines about the crisis at hand.

In these situations a Napoleon often appears, ready to settle matters with a wave of the sword. Will this be Alexander Lebed, the brash-talking former general who was quickly drafted by Boris Yeltsin as a top security adviser—and shadow running mate—after Lebed finished a strong third in last month's election?

Lebed certainly seems to have filled a leadership vacuum in the Kremlin as the country braces for the runoff election for president on Wednesday.

Within days of joining Yeltsin, senior Russian military commanders and their supporters were purged amidst dark talk by Lebed of a coup attempt. Then, amid more chaos, erratic staff upheaval and raw-nationalistic slogans by Lebed about "foreign religions" and "mold and scum" threatening Russian security, Yeltsin pulled another of his odd vanishing acts.

First there was word Yeltsin had dropped from view because of a throat ailment; then there were rumors of renewed heart trouble. There was even speculation that he had died.

Whatever the truth, there is no evidence of anything in the Yeltsin camp but dangerous instability and loss of control as voters get ready to decide

between him and Gennady Zyuganov, his Communist rival for the presidency.

But will it be Lebed, who eventually triumphs over the two of them?

It is interesting to note that the law says that you may vote for one, or against them all. Further, the law stipulates that if none of the candidates gets 50 percent—there are various conditions with regards to this 50 percent level, I am not going to dwell on them now—then new elections would be held in three or four months, and participants in the second round would have no right to run.

I used to have a fairly positive view of Lebed, but I was astonished by his behavior during the election when he failed to join forces with other centrist candidates.

Lebed turned out to be a Trojan horse—after all, he was the one initiating talks about creating a coalition with liberal economist Grigory Yavlinsky and the well-known eye surgeon, Svyatoslav Fyodorov.

But nothing happened. Later reports surfaced that Lebed was given several million dollars by Yeltsin, and that his campaign was organized by Yeltsin staff members. I think Yeltsin also needed Lebed to take away votes from Zyuganov.

The so-called "third force" failed to materialize. Lebed almost became a front runner (a phenomenon reminding me of Venus emerging from the sea foam), and the election

became chiefly a contest between Yeltsin and Zyuganov, though neither man reached the 50 percent vote needed to win the first round of the election outright.

Yeltsin got 35 percent; Zyuganov, 32 percent. Yeltsin must have been especially disappointed since he used every means at his disposal, including enormous sums of public money, and this is a subject that should be investigated by parliament—in order to achieve victory.

In the process Lebed got 15 percent of vote on the back of his slogans—discipline, order, the fight against corruption and crime, reform of the army, defense of the nation's dignity—all of which were deeply felt by the people.

It was a protest vote, but the Communist vote was also in large measure a protest vote.

Obviously, no Napoleonic solution would be good for Russia. Hopefully what's happened so far has made it clear about the need for a solid, centralist political opposition.

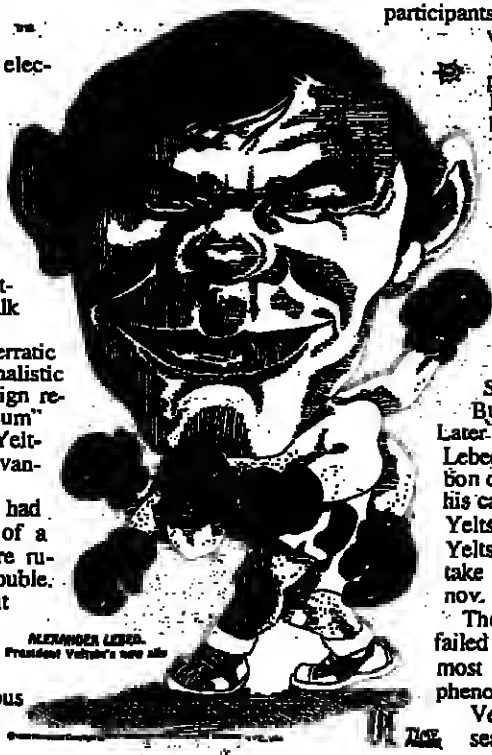
We need to change the powers of the president, broaden the role of the prime minister and parliament, give a new direction to economic policy so that it works to the benefit of the masses, not just bankers and criminal groups.

This will be difficult but not impossible. I think I could even work with Zyuganov if he creates a coalition government.

This is something he has talked about to voters: it would be made up one-third of Communists, one-third Yeltsin supporters and one-third deputies from other parties represented in parliament.

Yeltsin's people—no surprise—contend this kind of government would be unconstitutional. But I would do this only if the coalition had overall national goals, including changes in the power structure and in the social and economic course of the reforms. ■

Mr Gorbachev is the former president of the now defunct Soviet Union.



Business scene

■ The Minister of Industry and Commerce, approved the issuance of 3.2 million shares worth JD 5.55 million for three Jordanian companies, including the General Arab Insurance Co., the Union of Chemical Industries and Vegetable Oils Co., and the El Zay Readywear Manufacturing. The financial director of Al Zay, Ali Al Seif said that his company issued 1.5 million new shares with JD 1.8 per share, in a bid to increase its capital from JD 6 million to JD 7.5 million. Three Saudi, Italian and British companies will contribute to subscription in its shares. The company is planning to expand its activity and promote its production in Italy and the European markets.

■ The Jordanian-Qatari Joint Higher Committee will meet next month to endorse a new trade and economic agreement replacing the former economic agreement signed in 1992. This agreement aims at developing and expanding the commercial relations between the two countries, opening the way for trade exchange and removing all obstacles in the way of economic co-operation and co-ordination. Customs tariffs are also to be cancelled on most exchanged cargo between Jordan and Qatar, as this agreement stipulates.

■ The sales of the Jordan Marketing Company (JMC) reached JD 1.4 million in 1995. The company cut its administrative expenses by 25%, and increased its assets by JD 1.1 million. The JMC made profits of JD 287 thousand. It succeeded in reducing the accumulating losses since 1994, and the net losses by the end of 1995 were only JD 223,794. Its unamortized charges and drafts were JD 1,154,242. Shareholders' rights by the end of the fiscal year (1995) were JD 1,419,619, and its budget movement closed at JD 2,850,971.

■ More than 60 projects will be carried out at a cost of \$2.6 billion between 1996-2000, according to the General Secretary of the Ministry of Planning, Dr. Nabil Ammani. There will be about 28 infrastructural projects. Dr. Ammani said that the economy experienced a growth rate that exceeded 6% over the last two years and Jordan was able to control inflation and reduce the budget deficit.

Foreign Exchange

	Buy JD	Sell JD
US\$	0.7080	0.7100
£	1.1008	1.1063
DM	0.4639	0.4662
SPY	0.5655	0.5683
FRF	0.1372	0.1379
YEN	0.6433	0.6565
DEM	0.4124	0.4145
ITL	0.0462	0.0464

Traders stress need for government action to trim decline on AFM

AMMAN (Star)—Jitters at the Amman Financial Market (AFM) increased as the official share index fell below 140 points for the first time since 15 months. It closed at 139.58 points earlier this week.

Some analysts attributed this sharp fall to weak demand which led dealers to sell at lower prices but with fewer shares. Economic analysts say that the AFM has recorded falling performance since the victory of Netanyahu in the 29 May Israeli elections and the formation of his right-wing government. Since then investors began to sell their shares because of what they see as the lack of confidence in the market.

It fell by 10% since its highest level last February when it recorded 155.63 points. The AFM suffers from a tight credit policy to support the dinar and interest rates on deposits. This transferred liquidity from the banks and investors to other activities that record higher yield, analysts said.

Despite expected flows of foreign investments valued at \$200 million by the end of this year from the newly established funds, together with the current attractive prices that create better investment opportunities, many dealers remain anxious and express fears about what is seen as the ailing peace process in the Middle East.

The volatile investment climate is a subject of much discussion in the AFM dealing room and between brokers. Analysts say that the psychological factor will certainly influence demand, in spite of existence of attractive shares to buy, and the low returns on stocks. They are presently at 13.5. It was 18.5 in the end of 1995.

However, these analysts are optimistic. They expect shares to increase a lot higher by the end of the year. The deputy investment director at the Jordan Investment and Finance Bank, Mr. Samir Jaradat attributed the weak demand to the psychological factor. He said there is ambiguity about future expectations in the market.

Market analysts pointed out that the profit of shareholding companies rose last year by more than 8% to reach JD 200 million, compared with figures recorded in 1994. This is due to a reduction in taxes.

Many industrial companies in Jordan depend greatly on neighboring markets, like Iraq, the Gulf states and increasingly, the Palestinian market. On the other hand, some analysts do not see the effects of the peace process to be of importance on the market. They say that improvement in the market depends on the fiscal and monetary policy of the government. They claim that the Amman Financial Market was not positive when the peace accord was signed between Jordan and Israel, neither, it was affected during the last Israeli attack on Lebanon. They thus conclude that the market is actually subject to domestic economic policies.

The director of the Atlas Investment Group (concerned in attracting foreign investments), Mr. Omar Al Masri said that there was no reduction in interest rates as the government had promised, nor do we expect any cuts during this month.

The Prime Minister, Abdel Karim Kabariti had visited the AFM few months ago, when prices recorded their lowest level during the year, and promised to devalue interest rates by the beginning of June, if Jordan's foreign reserves improve.

Mr. Al Masri added that the market will continue to fluctuate, until the interest rates decline. This is now expected during the last quarter of this year he went on to say.

There are other foreign investment funds in the Middle East, which are starting to make headway in the financial market. Last week, a new foreign fund bought 25,000 shares in the Al Ahl Bank which recorded high profits this year.

Financial analysts predicted that foreigners will invest between \$150 to \$200 million through the five newly established funds.

However, dealings in the market showed a decline of 19.4% to reach JD 2.5 million last week. Total shares traded were 1.7 million, through 2,717 contracts. Daily dealing averaged JD 0.5 million during last week compared with JD 0.6 million during the previous week.

The industrial sector comes in the top rank as it maintained JD 1.29 million, 52.3% of total dealings, then comes the banking and financial sector with JD 0.76 million, and a 31% of the total. This was followed by the service sector at JD 0.39 million, 15.9% and finally is Insurance sector with JD 15,000, at 0.6% of total dealing.

Compared with the closing prices of 90 companies, we find that 11 recorded an increase in their share prices, 64 recorded a fall in share prices and 15 companies remained stable.

Some brokers at the Amman Financial Market met recently to discuss the market trend after the sharp decline in the volume of dealings and share prices.

The chairman of the Financial Market Brokers Association, Mr. Bahjat Al Bilbeisi met with the governor of the Central Bank, recently. He stressed the need to cut interest rates to revive the market and improve dealings.

While shifting to a non-primary commodity dependent economy overnight is unrealistic, a first step must take place. In addition, prudent customs and monetary policies such as reducing export taxes and guarding against an over-valued currency can help.

According to neoclassical economic theory, trade is the engine of growth. Unfortunately, however, not all kinds of trade provide the same horse power. Countries such as Jordan, for example, which are heavily dependent on the export of primary commodities, are more inclined to be adversely affected by price fluctuations on world markets and thus stifle growth.

Jordan is a victim of such a situation. In 1994, just over 50 percent of domestic exports were comprised of commodities such as food related agricultural products and fertilizers. Overall, exports of raw materials, meanwhile, constituted slightly over 55 percent of total exports which stood at 793.9 million for 1994.

Such a reliance on primary commodities imposes severe constraints on the growth capability of the Jordanian economy, for the accompanying fluctuations in export related revenue caused by the instability of prices, coupled with the regularity by which technological and manufactured goods are imported. This results in an ever widening trade deficit.

Besides dealing with the challenges of price fluctuations and its equally challenging ramifications, countries dependent on primary commodity revenue must also contend with the very real possibility of a general drop in prices. This decline becomes more of a possibility as income levels rise and demand for primary commodities is substituted with manufactured goods.

Increasing usage of synthetic alternatives in place of natural products and minerals such as in the case of artificial sweeteners for sugar and plastics for metals, coupled with decreased consumption of tobacco items and edible oils and fats—which made up 14.6 percent of exports in 1995—brought about by health concerns, has also led to a general drop in export revenue. Consequently, one observes a significant rise in the country's trade deficit has risen approximately 35.5 percent between 1990 to 1995 in Jordan's case.

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Business Chronicle

By Mohammad Adawiya

The engine of growth

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Azar calls for changes in public sector to encourage Arab and foreign investment

AMMAN (Star)—The Deputy Chairman of the Amman Chamber of Industry and Commerce, Mr. Wasif Azar stressed the need for government administrative reform.

In a speech at the Orthodox Club, Mr. Azar said that investment in Jordan doesn't consider what he called the time factor. Many investments are either non-productive (such as building large houses and costly settlements) or very costly compared with the industrialized countries because of the long construction period.

In developed countries, the value of time and price is precious. He said the blame must be born by the legislative and executive. New laws, and regulations must be passed quickly to enable investors, manufacturers, and contractors to move ahead without obstacles, Mr. Azar maintained.

He proposed a balance between population growth and resources. This will certainly help increase local output and promote a higher standard of living.

The Labor market must absorb more people to reduce unemployment. Mr. Azar also called for making better use of financial policies and taxes as development tools rather than merely as a way for collecting money for expenditure.

Investment has to be directed towards desired economic aims, and employ a policy for the welfare of the country. Policy has to work according to the requirements of the economy and not vice-versa.

He called for review of the government role, and its budget and urged it to increase the standard of profit rather than cost. The way should be opened for a more private sector activity. It must be given more incentives. But such a role should be directed.

There is urgent need to establish close relations with Arab countries and revive a joint Arab market that can stand strongly in front of international economic allies, Mr. Azar pointed out.

It is a great mistake to take American and European markets, as alternatives for Arab markets. We should look for promoting our goods in both Arab, European and American markets at the same time.

Mr. Azar explained that some foreign investments in Jordan are mostly subsidiary investment to basic activities in Israel, and take advantage of the marketing ability and Israeli influence in the European markets.

These investments are not suitable to Jordan's development requirements, and will put her economy under the influence of others. We have to attract other Arab and foreign investments and make our technical, administrative and marketing potentials more effective so that our products become more competitive in Arab and international markets, Mr. Azar said.

Concern has also to be given to domestic industries which provide the market with new job opportunities and foreign currency. Investments in the tourism sector has to develop capacities of direct tourism marketing which must develop in parallel with the increase of building new hotels with high quality services.

Local medical services are not properly marketed on the Arab or African fronts. Medical federations must take part of the blame for this as they don't promote these services outside Jordan.

Also tourism should play a greater role through its travel agencies. Mr. Azar noted that there is three basic points of weakness in the economy.

First, imbalance between resources and population. There is no growth of resources to cover the increase in inhabitants.

Second, imbalance between education, training and the requirements of the labor market. Education, on all levels, is not able to create a generation of pioneers in the economic and industrial field who can lead the process of creative work and development. There is also lack of high qualification programs for labor in the technical, technological, administrative and banking fields.

Third, imbalance between the government and private sectors. There is no need to expand activities and increase public expenditure if the emphasis is now on the private sector.

The excessive optimism after the signing of the peace treaty with Israel in 1994 quickly vanished with people becoming anxious about the future. Despite the fact that figures indicate a remarkable increase in domestic economic growth, the businessman, manufacturer, farmer, employee and the unemployed all are worried.

Jordan's size, small population and scarce resources should not account for a deficiency in the economic structure, growth rate and inability to achieve international economic records.

There are other countries with similar features but are economically developed, with high incomes and good growth rate, Mr. Azar pointed out.

However the situation of Jordan is different as it suffered from foreign occupation under the Ottoman empire, and then by an enemy backed and supported by the west. This led to deficiency in the economy, weak communications and low educational and professional levels.

Furthermore, the government started its development track since the sixties and built its social, economic and educational infrastructure. Educated and skillful Jordanian expatriates in the Arab oil-producing countries participated with their incomes in the prosperity that occurred in the country at that time.

In the seventies, Jordan benefited from the increase in oil prices in Arab Gulf states. This was through financial assistance that financed development projects in Jordan. The role of the private sector until that time was still weak compared with the role of the public sector.

In mid-eighties the value of external aids became less and the government depended greatly on internal sources such as taxes. This formed a burden on the private sector that suffers and is still suffering from. The size of the population increased greatly during the seventies and eighties, because

Venue on regional economic cooperation to start

A CONFERENCE on Regional Economic Cooperation in the Mediterranean, will be held between 8-9 July at the Royal Cultural Center. It is sponsored by Al Urdun Al Jadid Research Centre and the Conrad Adenauer Foundation.

Participants in the conference include economic lecturers from Jordan, Tunisia, Egypt, Palestine, Lebanon and representatives from the European Community.

The discussion will focus on economic cooperation in the region and the European Community, the current situation and the future prospects, political dialogue in the Middle East and its impact on the economies of the region in addition to chances and obstacles for trade and investment in the region.

Union Bank raises its capital to JD 20 million

THE UNION Bank is planning to increase its paid up capital to JD 20 million from its current capital of JD 11 million. The general Assembly of the Union Bank for Saving and Investment is to circulate its profits for 1995, which reached JD 125.4 thousand.

The General Manager of the bank, Mr. Essam Al Safili said the Bank recorded a 19 percent growth in its budget compared with JD 191 million. Money and Quasi-Money liquidity of the Bank was 48.6 percent of its budget.

The Bank offered credit facilities and loans amounting to 30.2 percent of its budget (JD 57.5 million). Investment in securities was JD 24.2 million (12.8 percent of assets), recording a growth of 37 percent. It's deposits reached JD 162.9 million by the end of 1995, an increase of 21 percent compared to 1994.

The Bank's management hopes to expand more deposits through offering new investment programs. Total returns went up by 31% during 1995 to reach JD 16.86 million, and the profits from its operations was JD 2.482 million, he said.

General Motors, in conjunction with Universal Motors of Tel Aviv, was the final recipient of the award. Vice Chairman Harry Pearce said in an interview on 26 June, "I hope that our efforts encourage other US companies to work in conjunction with companies in the Middle East."

Universal and General Motors received the award for creating an environment in which they were able to sell more North American-made GM cars in Israel than in all of Europe.

According to Kahn Communications, a public relations agency which conceived the award, the Ron Brown Peace Through Commerce Award was established in order "to recognize a business person, or company, who has taken risks in international business which have resulted in advancing the causes of stability, economic growth and peace."

The award is a memorial to the late Secretary of Commerce Ron Brown as a way to keep his name alive and acknowledge the efforts he made towards promoting peace through commerce and trade.

USIA

The Star
652380

MARKET WATCH 29 JUNE-2 JULY

Highest and lowest performing stocks in the Amman Financial Market

SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jordan Rock Wool Industry 5.32 Rafid Plastic Industry 5.00 Al-Nar Al-Ambi Insurance 4.98 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AKARCO 5.56 Jordan Rock Wool Industry 5.05 Arab Potash 4.72 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Int'l Textile Manuf. 2.44 United Investment Bank 2.29 International Trade 1.85 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Int'l Textile Manuf. 4.76 El Zay Ready Wear Manuf. 1.69 Int'l Education & Investment 1.25
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> International Trade Centre 5.56 United Investment Bank 4.84 El Zay Ready Wear Manuf. 4.79 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Int'l Textile Manuf. 4.65 Livestock & Poultry 3.64 JIMCO 3.77 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Livestock & Poultry 5.66 National Industry 5.13 Woolen Industry 4.84 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Int'l Textile 6.12 Amman Investment Bank 5.26 Baytana for Investment 5.10
General Price Pointer 139.810	141.420	140.200	139.190
Trade Volume 456153	562259	616711	577193
Stock Volume 312391	323468	547902	536024
Highest Traded Stocks			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cement factories 59.440 Cement factories 100.602 Gulf Insurance 75.993 International Textile 101.200 			

All data provided by ACCESS Tel: 646868 Fax: 646949

Ron Brown award presented to three companies in region

By Saadia Siddique

WASHINGTON—A Palestinian, an American, and an Israeli company have received the first Ron Brown Peace Through Commerce Award for their efforts to promote peace in the Middle East through economic stability.

One of the recipients, Ziad Karam, president and CEO of GRG, a building firm based in Fairfax, Virginia, plans to build a Marriott hotel in Gaza which will employ hundreds of workers in the area. "This is an investment in peace by bringing jobs and economic prosperity to Palestinians," Karam said in an interview.

Karam added that his company plans to work with an

investment firm from Qatar and that the project will be a long-term regional effort. "The award meant a lot to us because it recognized all our efforts," he said.

Similarly, Culligan Water Technologies CEO Doug Pertz expressed optimism about doing business in the Middle East. "We look at this project as promoting peace in the region," Pertz said in a separate interview 25 June. He added that economic investment is an important avenue to creating political stability in the region.

Moreover, Pertz stated that the project will involve several groups working together to "promote the betterment of the region." The company plans to produce the first Palestinian

brand of bottled water.

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Palestine Post

Sharp hike in foodstuff prices in Palestinian markets

■ The results of the survey on the level of expenditure and consumption of Palestinian families indicated that it rose by 0.29% in May compared to April. This is a 5.7 percent rise since the beginning of the year according to the Palestinian Department of Statistics.

The biggest increase was related to foodstuff prices. This is because of the closing of the Palestinian territories since the last three months.

Grain prices went up by 8.7% in May compared to April, as a result of high price of Israeli wheat. However, fruit prices went down by 8.6% in May. Textiles and clothes recorded a slight increase. There was also a huge increase in prices of health services, furniture and utensils.

Strike paralyzes Israel economy

■ Economic activity was partially paralyzed in Israel this week. More than 400,000 workers went on strike for an hour in a reaction from the public sector over austerity measures adopted by the right-wing government headed by Benjamin Netanyahu. The strike was called for by the Histadrut, the Israeli labor federation. Israel was isolated from the world, air traffic came to a standstill at the Ben Gurion International Airport, and ships were not allowed to dock.

Histadrut general secretary Emir Peretz said "The aim of this strike is a warning to the government, that laborers will react against attempts to affect their rights."

Despite the large foreign investments, Israel faces a huge deficit of \$12 billion in its trade balance. The new government of Israel is embarking on a huge privatization program of at least 50 public corporations.

"Al Sharq Gate", new settlement in North Jerusalem

■ Israel is planning to carry out a large settlement program in Jerusalem under the so-called "Al Shark Gate" scheme. The government is planning to confiscate 2500 dunums from the Shifat camp in the north of Jerusalem.

This project, which will certainly be carried out almost immediately, will most likely lead to resistance from the local Palestinian inhabitants. However, the government tried to downplay this by saying that the Arab owners of these lands will be compensated.

Al Quds has now a complaints column

■ The Jerusalem-based *Al Quds* daily now has a daily complaints column on its front page. The newspaper is inviting Palestinians in the self-rule areas and the Occupied Territories to put their complaints on paper. The column is a novel way of bringing citizens and officials of the Palestinian Authority closer together. Recently, there has been a lot of complaints about services run by the PNA and about violations, and it is hoped that such a gesture by *Al Quds* may help to put things right.

US rejects Iraqi latest plan to implement oil-for-food deal

By John M. Goshko
LA Times-Washington Post News Service

UNITED NATIONS—The US last Monday rejected an Iraqi plan for distributing food and medicine under Iraq's oil-for-food agreement with the United Nations—a judgment that means President Saddam Hussein's government must revise the proposal before the deal can be implemented to help Iraq's hard-pressed population.

Iraqi officials said that it had already agreed on a plan with the UN to import food and medicine up to a million dollars. The Iraqi Minister of Health, Mr. Omayad Mubarak said the agreement was drawn up after Iraq contacted international pharmaceutical companies.

This latest US rejection dashes UN and Iraqi officials' hopes that implementation of the oil-for-food deal could begin later this month.

"We think (the Iraqi plan) is unacceptable," James P. Rubin, spokesman for the US delegation at the UN said. "It demonstrates that Iraq is not serious about moving forward to implement this agreement."

Rubin said the Iraqi proposal would permit Baghdad to evade some UN sanctions and would improperly give Saddam's government a grip on distributing supplies to separatist Kurds in northern Iraq.

The oil-for-food agreement, reached in May, would ease the UN's economic sanctions against Iraq, in effect since the 1990 Gulf crisis, by permitting Baghdad to sell \$2 billion worth of oil over six months to buy food and other humanitarian supplies.

To get the accord, Iraq had to accept stringent conditions demanded by the United States and its Security Council allies for monitoring the sales and distribution of supplies. The agreement called for Iraq to submit an implementation plan that must be approved by Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali and the council's sanctions committee.

As a permanent Security Council member, the United States can veto any council action. US officials said the Iraqi plan was objectionable partly because it would make Baghdad a major distribution point for goods earmarked for the Kurdish areas, thereby allowing the Iraqis to skim items intended for the north and divert them elsewhere.

By Hasan Ferhat

THE OIL-RICH countries of the Middle East lag behind some of their more impoverished neighbors in science and technology, according to a survey of science in the Arab world published by UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. Both Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, which enjoy the region's highest per capita income, spend among the lowest proportions—0.22% and 0.11%—of their national income on scientific research and development (R&D). Impoverished Egypt, in contrast emerges as the region's leader, spending 0.34% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) on research and development. Jordan with no economic muscles to speak of comes second; it spends 0.24 percent. However, these figures pale when compared to the industrialized world average of two percent. They are also significantly below the one per cent threshold level generally considered to be the minimum acceptable proportion of GDP spent on research and development.

Interestingly, the survey points out that science and technology were among the first areas to suffer budget cuts after the 1991 Gulf War. R&D spending in Kuwait,

for example, dropped from \$72 million in 1985—it was rising at a rate of 12% per year—to \$47 million in 1992. The UNESCO survey notes that a majority of countries have invested 'sizeable financial resources' to develop a research infrastructure. But, few, if any, are prepared to maintain the required degree of investment that will bring results.

In 1992, according to the survey, the Arab world spent \$548 million on R&D, amounting to only 0.1 percent of the cumulative GDP for the Arab states during the same year.

Agriculture emerged as the dominant research field, with a total of 88 institutions in Arab states, involving 44%—around 6,400—of the region's researchers. Health comes next with 36 institutions having less than 1,000 researchers. Atomic energy emerges as the dominant field within the energy sector.

Seven hundred researchers out of 1,500

Turkey could find it difficult to accept new Islamic government

By Kelly Couturier
LA Times-Washington Post News Service

ANKARA, Turkey—Necmettin Erbakan became modern Turkey's first Islamic prime minister last Friday but beaded toward a tough battle to get his coalition government approved in parliament.

Erbakan was named by

President Suleyman Demirel after putting together a Cabinet with the help of former Prime Minister Tansu Ciller, a Western-oriented economist who agreed to bring her secular True Path Party into partnership with Erbakan's Welfare Party. Under the coalition formula, Ciller will hold the posts of deputy prime minister and foreign minister.

If he survives a confidence vote expected in the coming days, Erbakan's government would move aside a secular elite that has ruled Turkey for more than seven decades and advocated membership in the European Union. If he fails to win parliamentary endorsement,

however, Turkey seems likely to remain mired in a political stalemate. The key NATO ally has been without stable, civilian leadership since Ciller's coalition government collapsed last September, leading to early elections three months later, in which the Welfare Party was the top vote-getter.

The military, which has assumed power in Turkey three

times since 1960, has vowed to uphold the secular nature of the Turkish republic. It has made no secret of its distaste for Welfare and its brand of political Islam. The Welfare Party, although it advocates Islamic ways, represents a more moderate version of fundamentalism than other Islamic political movements, such as Hezbollah in Lebanon. Erbakan himself has been described as more of a Turkish nationalist than an Islamic fundamentalist, calling on Turks to emphasize their traditional Muslim values and stop imitating the West.

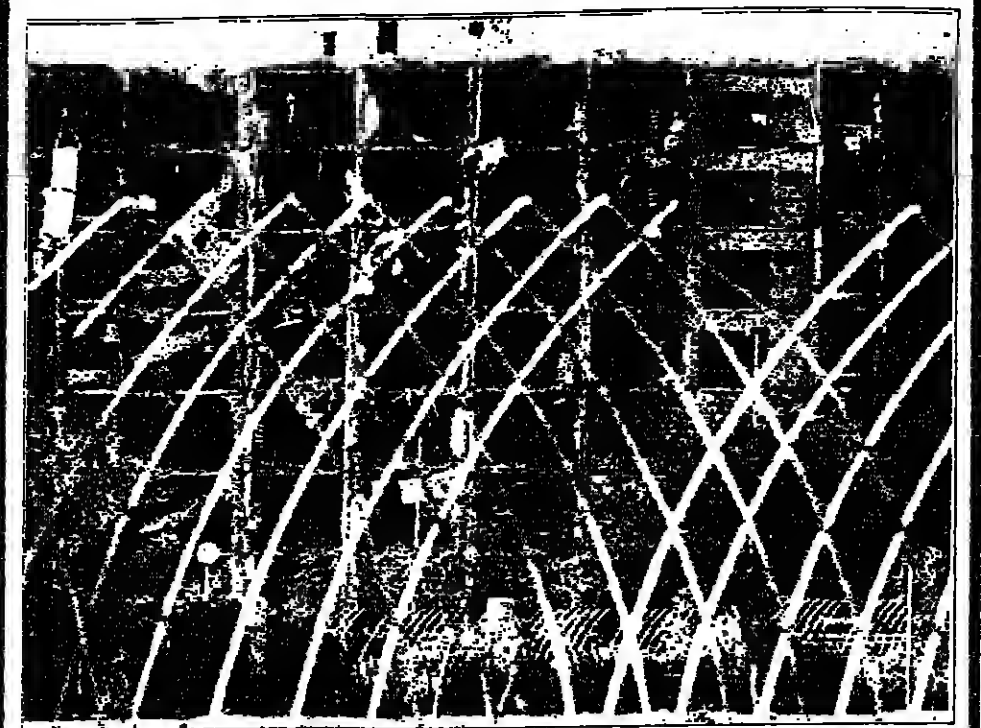
But his emergence as prime minister nevertheless has called into question the Western, pro-US stance Turkey traditionally has maintained in international affairs.

Erbakan has said he favors moving Turkey closer to the surrounding Muslim world and has questioned a customs agreement between Turkey and the European Union designed to anchor Turkey more firmly in the... camp of Western democracies.

Erbakan's party strongly opposes the US-led force based in southern Turkey that enforces the "no-fly zone" in northern Iraq designed to protect Saddam Hussein. Erbakan also has lashed out against the recent stepped-up military cooperation between Turkey



Erbakan



● Wreckage of the bombed American occupied apartment building at the King Abdul Aziz Air Base in Dahrhan, Saudi Arabia, last week. The explosion, that was caused by an estimated five tons of explosives loaded on to a 5,000 gallon fuel lorry, devastated the site, creating a crater of 35 feet deep and 45 feet wide.

and Israel. "Did the Jews not bomb our Muslim brothers in Lebanon?" Erbakan asked at a campaign rally earlier this month.

Standing in front of a portrait of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, modern Turkey's staunchly secularist founding father, Erbakan declared last Friday that "to the joy of everyone, Turkey has a new government."

But the coalition is expected to face a stiff challenge in the upcoming vote of confidence. Opponents from within Ciller's party are expected to join the other main center-left party, Motherland, in voting

against the new government. To win the confidence vote, the new government needs the support of a majority of voting members of parliament. Welfare has 158 members and True Path Party has 129 in the 550-seat parliament, together constituting a majority.

But as many as 20 True Path members are expected to vote against the coalition, including outgoing Foreign Minister Emre Gonensay, who reiterated his opposition to the Islamic-led government. The new Cabinet's makeup, clearly designed to calm fears among Turkey's secular elite as well as its Western allies, shows

the conservatives keeping control of key posts such as defense, foreign affairs, economy, education and interior.

The Welfare Party, which controls many of Turkey's municipal governments and has built an efficient grass-roots party into the biggest political party in the country, has gained supporters by providing basic services to the country's poorest citizens. The party won its slim victory in the December parliamentary elections by riding a tide of public discontent with a political class largely perceived as self-serving and corrupt.

Meeting between Netanyahu and Arafat may take place sooner than expected

By Glenn Frankel
LA Times-Washington Post News Service

JERUSALEM—Two representatives of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's new government have delivered a carrot-and-stick message to Yasser Arafat in the first session ever held between envoys from Israel's right-wing Likud party and the leader of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Government officials confirmed that the meeting took place last week at Arafat's residence in the Gaza Strip but refused to discuss the session. Israeli sources and news reports indicated that Arafat was told that Netanyahu is committed to continuing talks with a financial support for the PLO-led Palestinian Authority.

At the same time, however, Netanyahu's envoys told Arafat that his commitment to fighting terrorism must be unwavering, and that the continuation of terrorism and the advancement of the peace process cannot coexist.

Arafat for his part reportedly insisted that Netanyahu honor commitments made to him by the previous Labor-led government, including withdrawing Israeli troops from the West Bank city of Hebron and allowing Palestinians to engage in limited diplomatic and political activities at Orient House, the PLO's unofficial headquarters in disputed East Jerusalem.

Throughout the recent election campaign that unseated Labor's Shimon Peres, Netanyahu insisted that Arafat at the least had turned a blind eye toward suicide bus bombings by Islamic militants operating largely from Palestinian-held territory. He condemned Peres for meeting frequently and on



Netanyahu



Arafat

friendly terms with the PLO chief, who is viewed with great suspicion and unease by many Israelis, and indicated that he would not meet with Arafat.

Since his election last month, Netanyahu's tone has softened slightly. He has promised to open channels of communication with the Palestinian Authority at various levels and has not ruled out meeting with Arafat. But first he appears determined to wrest some sort of concession from the PLO leader on security matters, which were one of the major reasons Netanyahu triumphed over Peres.

Dore Gold, Netanyahu's American-born foreign affairs adviser who has been his point man for contacts with the PLO, led the Israeli side in the brief and businesslike session. There were reports last Friday night that higher-level contacts with officials such as Foreign Minister David Levy or Defence Minister Yitzhak Mordechai may follow soon.

News of the meeting touched off a row at Friday's Israeli cabinet session. Science Minister Benjamin Begin, son of the late prime minister Menachem Begin and a former

thought about it before he joined the government. Begin's position is considered a minority view even within the right-leaning cabinet. And respondents in a poll

rival of Netanyahu for leadership of the Likud, condemned the Arafat meeting as "a mistaken policy."

Netanyahu replied harshly, according to Cabinet Secretary Danny Naveh, telling Begin that "if he has any complaints he should have

published last week in the *Yedioth Aharnoth* newspaper agreed by a 2-to-1 margin that Netanyahu should meet with Arafat.

Palestinians see such a meeting as an early test of the new government's good faith and intentions. They have been alarmed by Netanyahu's early declarations that he is unalterably opposed to Palestinian statehood or the granting of sovereignty over any portion of Jerusalem. They contend the new prime minister, by emphasizing terrorism, is trying to change the subject and put the onus on them for any breakdown in the peace process.

The Israeli opposition contends Netanyahu may be engaging in the same diplomatic sleight of hand as the last Likud leader, prime minister Yitzhak Shamir, who agreed to talks with Arab leaders "without preconditions" but sought to stall the outcome indefinitely. Ehud Barak, the

former Labor foreign minister, mockingly called Netanyahu's proposals "a journey to the past."

But the new prime minister has made clear that he sees fighting terrorism as his top priority, one he will emphasize not only with the Palestinians but also in his dealings with Syria. In interviews this week, he accused Damascus of acting "as a terrorist state" and waging indirect war against Israel through Palestinian extremist groups and Lebanese gunmen.

Netanyahu equated the truck bombing of US soldiers in Saudi Arabia with a cross-border ambush of Israeli troops along the Jordan River earlier this week and said he hopes to enlist President Clinton in an effort to equate Syria with Iran and isolate Damascus diplomatically and economically next month when he pays his first call as prime minister at the White House.

Clean up world campaign to be held between 20-22 September

THE FOURTH Annual Clean Up The World Campaign will be held between 20-22 September. More than 40 million people from 110 countries are participating in the event. Jordan, Egypt and Israel will also be taking part.

"As we move towards the start of the new millennium it is essential we begin to make amends for the environmental atrocities we have inflicted on the earth over the course of recent human history," Ian Klemann, chairman of the Clean Up The World Campaign, said.

It is organized with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

"Clean Up The World will strive to involve every country on earth by the year 2000 in the largest community event ever staged in human history," Mr Klemann said. This year's campaign was officially launched by Mr Klemann and the Australian Federal Minister for the Environment, Senator Robert Hill, at the Australian National Maritime Museum.

"The environment knows no boundaries," Mr Klemann said. "We share the same oceans and the same air—

therefore it is essential we all take action to improve the state of our planet. We must ask ourselves what kind of world we want to live in - and what kind of environment we wish to pass on to our children."

Many nations have also formed permanent organizations to work on longer-term strategies to tackle environmental problems. Under the banner of EcoPeace, several countries in the Middle East, including Jordan, Israel and Egypt, are working together to improve the state of the mold-bordered Gulf of Aqaba.

Rich Arabs, poor science:

UNESCO survey provides no cause for celebration

energy scientists are engaged in nuclear energy research at 14 institutions within the Arab world. The nascent field of biotechnology comes bottom of the league, with only six research institutes engaging the services of less than 100 researchers devoted to gene technology in the entire Arab world. The survey's overall message of gloom was, nonetheless, tempered by news that the number of full-time research staff working in Arab countries has increased, from 11,900 in 1985 to 14,500 in 1992.

The proportion of research personnel qualified to doctoral level, Ph.D., also rose from 49% in 1985, to 54% in 1992, "a development considered to be positive," notes Dr Subhi Qasem, who compiled the survey for UNESCO. Indeed, more than half of the research staff in Sudan, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Egypt possessed a minimum qualification of a Ph.D. as did 45% of researchers in the Lebanon and 42% in

Iraq. Egypt, nonetheless, emerged head-and-shoulders above all other 21 countries surveyed: Egypt spends \$144 million on R&D. Sixty-three percent of its research workforce are qualified to PhD level or above.

Egypt also has 19 percent of the Arab world's research and development institutions and more than 50 percent of its 14,500 research staff. About 40 percent of them work in agriculture. But significant numbers work in other fields: 100 researchers are employed in the petroleum field; and 300 in nuclear energy. Egypt also has the largest number of biotechnologists in the region, a total of 50. In terms of the actual amount spent on R&D, Saudi Arabia's expenditure is \$1.3 billion, almost 10 times as much as Egypt's, though its 800 research staff are thinly spread across a whole range of disciplines. Agriculture and water are the two

biggest areas of inquiry.

Sudan's \$7 million is one of the lowest in the region, though it does have 600 research staff, divided equally among Ph.Ds and M.Sc.s. Iraq spends nearly one third of its \$33 million R&D budget on agriculture, employing about 300 researchers at M.Sc. and Ph.D. level. The National Date Palm research takes the second largest slice, with a budget of \$1.6 million, employing 107 researchers which include 26 Ph.Ds. Jordan's annual research budget of \$13 million is spread among 320 research staff.

Most of Kuwait's 176 Ph.Ds are employed in petroleum research, followed by industrial economics and food technology. Libya has an R&D budget of \$13 million, 20 percent of which is spent on seven animal feeding programs, Morocco which spends 0.22 percent of its gross domestic product emerges with 1,300 researchers, including 400 Ph.Ds. on a research and

development budget of \$62 million. Sixty-one Ph.Ds and 196 M.Sc.s work in agriculture. The survey notes that salaries for researchers remain among the lowest in the world and that short-term contract research is beginning to take hold, particularly in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Jordan. R&D is largely government-funded, though the money received is often less than the amount budgeted, according to the survey. The survey, however, does not contain any information about scientific publishing in the Arab world, nor does it indicate the quality of work being performed.

It also acknowledges that the term "researcher" is not universally defined. A researcher in one country, for example, could be considered a technician in another state. The data were subjected to a degree of verification, but were provided by the governments themselves.

MSANEWS

Dreamworks to launch hi-tech movies for the adventurous

By Claudia Eller
LA Times-Washington Post
News Service

HOLLYWOOD—After the initial rash of mega-hype surrounding DreamWorks' launch nearly two years ago, Hollywood wondered whether the company would deliver the creative goods it boasted so loudly it would.

The answer is now emerging as the closely watched studio venture formed in October 1994 by Steven Spielberg, David Geffen and Jeffrey Katzenberg has put its first slate of movies together. Despite the long pause before, DreamWorks put its first film into production last month. Walter Parkes and Laurie Macdonald—the husband and wife running the studio's movie division—have been quietly assembling an eclectic group of projects to be produced over the next 18 months.

In effect, the pair are carrying on the tradition of movies made by Spielberg's company Amblin Entertainment, which they headed for six months before the formation of DreamWorks.

Parkes and Macdonald said DreamWorks is basically interested in making two types of film: the higher-end "big idea" movie not unlike Amblin's current hit "Twister," and the smaller scale, perhaps more controversial or edgy movie that often involves new talent behind and in front of the camera.

"Where I don't think we'll be that active is making just the genre comedy or the genre action picture," said Parkes, to which Macdonald added, "There are a lot of movies made where you know the upside, creatively or economically, is not tremendous and you're just hoping it does OK. We're not in the business of doing that."



Jurassic Park, one of the many great movies of Steven Spielberg

As is the case at Amblin, DreamWorks will not be making violent or exploitative movies, nor is it likely to deal with NC-17 rated material.

Parkes said because DreamWorks is a company where production will drive distribution rather than the reverse—which is true of the major studios—"We won't be in a position in green light movies just to fill slots."

Last month, DreamWorks began production on its first non-animated movie, "The Pagemaker," a suspense thriller set in Russia starring George Clooney and Nicole Kidman. DreamWorks' debut release will be in theaters next fall.

Industry insiders and DreamWorks' rivals have been curious about how committed Spielberg will be as a director to his own company since he's free to make movies anywhere he chooses.

According to Spielberg, very committed. "I'd prefer to direct inside my own company," Spielberg said.

"But, my first choice is the material. I'm committed to directing where I can find the best scripts and novels. The play's the thing."

Spielberg, who is contractually committed to DreamWorks for the next 10 years, said, "I give my best efforts to get productions going if material happens to be at another studio."

Such is the case with a project called "Saving Private Ryan," a Paramount movie to star Tom Hanks that DreamWorks is negotiating to co-produce.

There are at least three other projects (plus one "secret one") Spielberg has earmarked to direct for DreamWorks after completing "Jurassic II" this fall for Amblin/Universal.

DreamWorks' business plan is to produce two live action movies this year, four in 1997 and a maximum of seven to nine by 1998. Additionally, there will be one animated feature every year or every other year, on which Parkes and Macdonald will oversee the initial development and Katzenberg and his team will see

through to completion.

The company's average production cost will be around \$33 million, a bit more than the industry average of \$36.4 million for a studio movie. DreamWorks, backed by MCA, billionaire Paul Allen, One World Media and smaller investors, finances its own production, marketing and movie distribution.

While DreamWorks won't be producing a slate the size of other major studios, its movie division is an integral part of the business plan, which also calls for television production, music and interactive media.

"The motion picture division is the most important part of the company for me," said Spielberg. "Because it's what I know and do best. It's my primary focus."

It is also the most cost-intensive, notes Spielberg. "The commitment to development and production is the biggest cost drain to any motion picture studio."

Spielberg, whose Amblin movies have always been bankrolled by studio money, admits to being a bit shocked the first time DreamWorks plunked down \$1 million for a book, and \$750,000 for a script.

Spielberg works closely with Parkes and Macdonald in picking the movies and he said he feels lucky to have filmmakers running the division.

With their good looks and statuesque figures making them appear more like GQ models than studio executives, Parkes, 45, and Macdonald, 42, have spent the last year fulfilling Amblin commitments while building DreamWorks' first slate of pictures.

Unlike most Hollywood stu-

dios, DreamWorks—still housed in Amblin's Pheasant-style headquarters on Universal's back lot—prides itself on its non-corporate environment. The company has committed to giving writers and animators unprecedented profit participation on their movies.

"It's also a company that hopefully reflects the realities of our business in this decade, which means that there's less bureaucratic distance between divisions," said Parkes, whose credits as a writer or producer include "War Games," "Awakenings," "Sneakers" and "True Believer."

Parkes added that, "It's been my experience that at most studios, the TV and motion picture departments rarely communicate." He noted that "There are three owners who are literally here and there's clear and concise communication between everybody."

Ideas, rather than star packages, are what DreamWorks is banking on to drive its movies, which helps explain why it took the company so long to get its first production going. DreamWorks had no backlog of development to tap.

"We are less likely to be a company that just picks up something out of turnaround or buys a high-profile script," explained Macdonald, suggesting that DreamWorks would finance production on a higher percentage of projects it develops than most studios.

While DreamWorks' maiden slate may look good on paper, Spielberg cautions: "The slate looks interesting and compelling to me, but we all have to wait and see how it turns out. I've learned over the years not to attach my hopes on anything."

Power, passion drive Lollapalooza Headliner Metallica into action

By Robert Hilburn
LA Times-Washington Post
News Service

KANSAS CITY, USA—Maybe they should rename this summer's Lollapalooza tour the "Why-apolooza" tour. "Why" is certainly the word that organizers of the rock extravaganza heard repeatedly leading up to Thursday's start of the 25-city tour on 65 acres of the normally tranquil park grounds along Longview Lake, about a half-hour's drive south of here.

For the first five years of Lollapalooza, the competition was between the bands. As the sixth annual tour began before an estimated 20,000 fans in punishing, 90-degree heat, the issue wasn't so much how the bands were doing, but the credibility of Lollapalooza itself.

Many fans have asked why tour organizers—who in the past have focused primarily on alternative rock acts—selected Metallica, which came out of the rival heavy-metal genre, to headline this year's shows.

And why set up concerns on isolated fields rather than simply use conventional venues? Why not more diversity on the bill—more women, more hip-hop acts?

And why aren't tickets selling better on some stops on the tour? (Capacity for Thursday's show was between 35,000 and 40,000.)

"The idea of Lollapalooza was never to be a showcase for the alternative rock radio format," Marc Geiger, a tour co-founder, said backstage Thursday. "We wanted to defy formats and present great bands that challenged mainstream sensibilities."

In the past, he said, Lollapalooza presented mostly alternative rock artists because they were the ones who most lived up to the festival goals. But the vitality of that scene, he believes, has waned.

"The alternative scene has been stagnant the last couple of years—imitation acts just feeding off the energy and imagination of Nirvana and others," Geiger said.

"That's not the case with Metallica. This is a great band with immense credibility, and if that shakes some people up, then all the better, because it's good to be a little controversial."

Geiger also had answers for most of the other questions: Artists prefer the greater fan energy of outdoor, general-admission shows. Organizers tried to book some women, including PJ Harvey, for the tour, and had hoped the rap group the Wu-Tang Clan could have been on more than a few dates.

But he could not explain the spotty ticket sales for the tour, whose main-stage lineup also includes Soundgarden, the Ramones, Rancid, the Screaming Trees, the Shaolin Monks (a martial arts troupe that was unable to appear here because of immigration problems), Psychotica and the inaugural show's special guest, the arty, ethereal Cocteau Twins.

"I just don't know, and it's doubly puzzling because we are doing fabulous business in some cities ... 32,000 in Rockford, Ill. in 35 or 40 minutes ... 25,000 in New York, where we've added a second show," he said. "The only thing we can figure out is that we (angered) alternative people by putting Metallica on the bill. But I have no regrets. I am proud of the way Lollapalooza has evolved."

Some musicians backstage agreed. "To me, the idea of Metallica headlining makes perfect sense," said Chris Cornell, lead singer of Soundgarden and one of the most

respected figures in alternative rock. "For one thing, they are a great band, but they'll also bring in a lot of new people (to Lollapalooza), and you can turn on that audience to interesting new things they might otherwise never hear ... like the Cocteau Twins."

Moments later on stage, Cornell had fun with the Metallica controversy.

At the end of his band's set, he stared out at the crowd and spoke sarcastically about how bummed everybody must be, having to look forward to Metallica closing the show.

The crowd, most of which had been standing in the scorching sun for more than seven hours, let out a huge roar—both, it seemed, for Soundgarden's radiant set and for the pending arrival of Metallica, whose new "Load" album had been the nation's No. 1 seller for three weeks.

The afternoon's earlier bands had all played solidly, but none came close to the electrifying, career-launching punch of key supporting Lollapalooza sets over the years by such acts as Nine Inch Nails and Rage Against the Machine.

But Soundgarden brought the audience alive with a bold, self-assured performance that ended with "Blow Up the Outside World." It's a Beatles-esque tale of anxious self-affirmation on the new "Down on the Upside" album—a song that demonstrates Cornell's increasing maturity as a writer.

Returning to live shows after a three-year break, Metallica seemed inspired by the debate over whether it belongs on the tour. Midway during the group's 30-minute assault, complete with enough fireworks and other flashy effects to make KISS envious, lead singer James Hetfield couldn't resist poking more fun at the hoopla caused by his band's booking.

"Everybody out there OK?" he asked the crowd with mock concern. "Not scared, are you?"

He was apparently referring to concerns raised in some quarters before the tour about Metallica's aggressive fans roughing up the supposedly more mild-mannered alternative rock crowd.

As it turned out, the fans coexisted nicely as they listened to the music from the main stage, sampled nearly a dozen other bands on secondary stages (including Rancid, Ben Folds Five and Girls Against Boys) and browsed arts and crafts booths. This year, too, Lollapalooza features a fun zone complete with Ferris wheel, carnival games and such sideshow attractions as—yes, we promised, in the great PT Barnum tradition—a woman who lives despite having lost her head in a car accident.

But it was, as always, the music that defined the marathon event, and Metallica, images and marketing labels aside, played with a power and passion that forged a kinship with the metal or industrial side of such previous Lollapalooza standouts as Ministry and Rage Against the Machine.

Afterward, there was, ironically, only one question left for tour organizers. Why haven't all Lollapalooza tour headliners been this good?



Adding grit to modern novels

Welsh is an up-to-date documentarian of inner city decay, modern morality and depression-ridden coming-of-age

By Dennis Romero
LA Times-Washington Post
News Service

IN IRVINE Welsh we have one of the rawest writers to appear on the scene since the Beats of the '50s, the New Journalists of the '60s and the Realists of the '80s.

His gritty style is so new—a sort of literary hip-hop. Critics have been stumbling over each other to offer a cultural context for his work ("voice of the ghetto," "poet laureate of the chemical generation," "the chronicler of the ecstasy generation") and to compare him to someone familiar (William Burroughs seems to hit the keyboard most).

Welsh, 37, is an up-to-date documentarian of inner-city decay, modern morality and depression-ridden coming-of-age. His style is physically detailed, phonetically literal and internally logical. "I think what you can't make up is that cultural context," he says. "I like to feel as if I'm kind of immersed in the culture."

But one thing makes Welsh stand out even more: He's Scottish. His youth terrain revolves around the ghettos of Scotland—a new heroin hot zone for Europe.

It is ironic, in a way, that it takes a Scotsman to show us the depths of urban life, the logic of drug abuse, the reasons

for criminal being and even the politics behind a new generation of youth culture. That's what Welsh does in "Trainspotting," his first novel out now in paperback and soon to be released in the United States as a motion picture from Miramax (directed by Danny Boyle, it opens coast to coast July 19).

"The modern novel seems to be very much rooted in this middle-class, self-conscious literary tradition," Welsh says in a phone call from his native Edinburgh, where he's visiting from his new home in Amsterdam. "When I first started writing I thought it wouldn't really appeal to anyone because the audience I was writing to didn't really read books."

His working-class point of view might be a fresh addition to the American bookshelf. "In America, when so many young writers are coming out of Ivy League colleges, they're writing from a position of relative comfort," says Steven Daly, a Scots author and journalist based in New York. "That's why there's such a relative immediacy to his stuff here."

The success of "Trainspotting" in Europe both as book (it has sold several hundred thousand copies) and movie (the buzz of the Cannes Film Festival, it's the second biggest box-office hit in British history) has made Welsh a taste-maker. "In the same way that

somebody can take hold of the public cultural imagination in the way Quentin Tarantino has done in America," Daly says, "that's what Irvine Welsh has done in Britain."

Welsh has already emerged as a thoughtful voice about drug culture, both doubling legal double standards and touting psychedelics: "They'll always be there."

"Trainspotting"—named for the sport of watching trains, but perhaps metaphorically referring to the vein-spotting of opiate addicts—documents the party-hardy, couch-surfing, pub-crawling lives of a cast of youths-on-the-dole and their attempts to self-destruct, mainly via heroin.

Welsh writes, "and ye cannae anaesthetise yersel against it." The plot moves through the eyes of a handful of hooligans—Rentis the smartass, Begbie the bully and Sick Boy the womanizer—as they try to make a quick buck (gambling, drug dealing, welfare fraud) so they can stuff their veins with liquid death, travel to London on holiday or, better, move far, far away.

Despite its working-class milieu and high readability (if you can get through the Edinburgh street dialect), the novel employs the most sophisticated of literary techniques. Welsh uses point of view like a good

club deejay slices from song to song: The narrator becomes each main character chapter by chapter and takes the reader into the most intimate corners of life—even the bathroom.

"I'm interested in the whole idea of physical writing," Welsh says. "I think fiction is too cerebral."

Welsh seems to play to the attention this all brings to him, becoming a chameleon of identities, shifting around like his own narrative.

He says he's 37. The police in Glasgow, after arresting him recently for a little beer-inspired rowdiness, report he's 44. One day he's a working-class kid from the Edinburgh projects. ("When you got out, you were aware you had a working-class accent," he says. "I went to one of the crappy schools in the city.") The next day we discover he holds an MBA from Heriot-Watt University in Edinburgh.

One day he is coy and reluctant about his drug history ("There was a time when I thought things were spinning out of control," he says), the next he plays to the bad-boy writer role, partying hardy.

And while the structure behind "Trainspotting" is intricate, Welsh says his story-telling is rooted in his time writing reports as a work-a-day cog for the local government in Edinburgh.

Women in the Middle East

Human rights under attack

By Lamis Nasser
Special to The Star

WOMEN RIGHTS abuses are seldom tackled in the Middle East. Amnesty International seeks to put the record straight. Titled *Women in the Middle East—Human Rights Under Attack*, the report tackles many issues relating to this part of the world. The report focuses on one of the slogans adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing, China in 1995 on *Women's Rights are Human Rights*. This implies that women's rights to equality, development, and peace, the themes of women issues are unattainable without respect for women's fundamental rights.

Recognizing that human rights are indivisible and interdependent, Amnesty International worked to promote all the human rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, including women's rights.

The UN Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women

calls for "the universal application in women of the rights and principles with regard to equality, security, liberty, integrity and dignity of human persons."

Women and men's rights are protected by international law, yet in Middle Eastern countries, as elsewhere in the world, women are suffering a wide range of human rights violations and abuses. Women's human rights are under attack across the Middle East. In the violence of wars and conflicts, women are killed, taken hostage, raped, and driven from their homes. In peace, they are imprisoned and tortured for being related to political prisoners.

This report is published as part of Amnesty International's 1995 campaign to protect and promote women's rights around the world. The report covers 17 countries in the Middle East, calling on these countries' governments and armed political groups to listen to the voices of women—voices that are too often silenced by repression and discrimination.

The report consists of five sections: An introduction giving an overview of women's situation in several countries of the Middle East; secondly, a section on women and conflict, highlighting the tragic consequences for women living under occupation when their fundamental rights are devolved, ignored, and violated. The third reveals the plight of women activists; fourthly, on "women at risk" referring to those women who are considered guilty by association. These are the wives, sisters, mothers, or daughters of detained or exiled political activists. The fifth section cites 14 recommendations aiming at defending and promoting women's human rights.

The report establishes that women in the Middle East are speaking out for their rights. They are campaigning against human rights violations, working to raise awareness of human rights, and organizing themselves to defend human and women's rights.

In Lebanon, Widad Hilwani was propelled into activity by personal tragedy,

after her husband disappeared. She helped establish an organization to search for thousands of women and men who went missing during the 1975-1990 civil war.

In the Occupied Territories, Maysoon Al Wahaydi set up "The Committee of Mothers in Solidarity with Political Prisoners" after her daughter Abir Al Wahaydi was held a political prisoner.

Suha Al Barghouti founded the Committee to "End Administrative Detention" after her husband was administratively detained.

In Morocco, women relatives of political prisoners helped establish the "Association of the Families of the Disappeared," political prisoners, martyrs, and exiles.

In Egypt, Dr. Susan Fayad runs "El Nadim Center for the Management and Rehabilitation of Victims of Violence" established in 1992 to help women, men and children who are victims of torture, rape, domestic violence and child battering.

Another woman, Dr. Aida Saif Al Dawwlah heads the "New Woman Research Center" which deals with violence against women, rape, and other women's issues.

In Tunisia, women signed a petition in 1994 calling on the authorities to respect freedom of expression.

In Sudan, women protested against the executions that took place in 1990.

In Algeria, Bahrain, and Iraq, women have demonstrated for human rights.

In the last section, Amnesty International makes the following recommendations the following to curb such violations:

■ Recognize that women's rights are universal and indivisible.

■ Ratify and implement international treaties for the protection of human rights.

■ Eradicate discrimination which denies women's human rights.

■ Safeguard women's rights during armed conflict.

■ Stop rape, sexual abuse and other torture and ill-treatment by government agents.

■ Prevent "disappearances" and extra judicial executions by government agents and compensate the victims.

■ Stop persecution of family members and successors.





Jordan's Fourth Theatre Festival kicks off

● Jordan's Fourth Theater Festival was opened last Monday. The opening ceremony was attended by HRH Prince Ghazi, representative of HM King Hussein, speaker of the Upper House of Parliament Ahmed Al Lawzi, Minister of Culture, Ahmed Al Qudab, Minister of Youth, Mohammad Dawoudieh and a number of Jordanian dramatists and artists.



Marcel Khalifeh

Writing the history of Arabic music

By Munther Hamdan
Star Staff Writer

This time it is music which will be speaking while the singer remains silent. While many festivals are taking place this summer, Marcel Khalifeh, the well-known Lebanese singer and composer, tipped in Amman to present an unexpectedly music collection played on the Arabic lute. It was titled *Jadal* (Argument).

Always known for songs that carry a nationalist spirit, Khalifeh's *Jadal* is devoted to music itself. He wants music to speak for itself, in a style that appeals more to the mind rather than the heart.

This new kind of compositions seek to reshape the musical tastes of people. His music creates a sophisticated rhythm which comes out as a result of an argument between two lute players—the old and the modern. Last week, he held two concerts in Philadelphia cinema, organized by the Jordan River Design.

Since Arabic music, unlike Arabic song, lacks a specific history, Khalifeh aspires to establish by his *Jadal* a history of Arabic music. He said that in the past, specifically before 600 years, the Arab world used to have great musicians like Ziryab who had a musical school named after him.

stopped developing which deprived Arab culture from a deeply embedded tradition. "We want to establish a new history for Arabic music," he said.

As expected, during a press conference, Khalifeh answered questions of why he is seeking to limit himself to this kind of music especially at a time when people need to be shown the right direction. Khalifeh explained that this new experience is not separate from his old songs but it is, on the contrary, a continuation. "I agree that music is abstract but deep down it is expressive of the everyday rhythms of our life," he said.

"We come to Amman to present something quiet, and though the place will be smaller, it will open new horizons in the minds of people who are required to think about what they hear and not be overwhelmed by it," he added.

Khalifeh's *Jadal* is unique. It seeks to create that kind of



conflict between the composer and the player on the one hand and the different styles of playing on the other. It is about two Arabic lute players, one performs a modern piece and the other an old one. This kind of argument results in a conflict and "not a dialogue." "The conflict we are talking about will eventually generate new ideas and tastes," he said. He added that "we use the familiar to move into a more 'fertile' and unfamiliar music."

Answering a question on how *Jadal* represented Lebanon in the post-war era, Khalifeh told *The Star* that war is still on. "The peace that ex-

ists now is fragile not only in Lebanon but also in the rest of the Arab countries." Music can not be translated into a literary text because music in itself is a distinct language, he added.

Khalifeh criticized the decline of musical tastes that exist today. He said that we must be careful about the kind of music and singing we present on TV or Radio. "What we listen to is not fit to be aired; it is better presented in night eluhs." He added that the had songs we hear and watch everyday are merely pollution that disturbs our hearing and confuse our sights.

Khalifeh was born in 1950 in the Lebanese city of Amshet. He studied the Arabic lute in the National Conservatory of Beirut. In 1972, he formed a group called Amshet which set the base for Al Mayadeen group that continued to be one of the most influential around the globe. He composed the music for the Karakala dancing troupe in an attempt to develop what can only be described as an "oriental ballet." Some of his compositions include *Songs of Ahmed Al Arabi*, *Songs of the East* and the *Symphony of Return*. Khalifeh was accompanied by the Arabic lute player, Sharpeh Rohan, Ruq player Ali Al Khateeb and Abud Al Sa'di, a guitarist. ■

Royal EFFEM introduced to the market



Abber Abd Al Raheem and Maria Bianconi (right)

TROY TRADING Ltd company has lately introduced to the local market the new Italian cosmetics, Royal EFFEM. On this occasion, the company held a reception at the Intercontinental Hotel last Sunday. The meeting was attended by the General manager of Troy Ltd, Aheer Abd Al Raheem, the Italian Commercial Attache in Jordan, Maria Bianconi and a large number of Jordanian ladies.

At the beginning of the reception, Al Raheem gave a glimpse about this new cosmetics.

This was followed by a detailed exposition of the new compound. It was said that Royal EFFEM contains natural and refreshing oils, several vitamins, UVA and UVB filters in addition to olive oil which protects the skin from the sun-rays. Using an audio-visual explanation, Mr Marwan Khelr, an expert in cosmetics, highlighted the way Royal EFFEM is used. A draw on the invitation cards concluded the event. ■

Arab culture enhanced from Paris

AMMAN (Star)—Presenting the cultural face of the Arab world has been basic to the establishment of the Arab World Institute (Institut du Monde Arabe) in Paris. The institute has a wide membership including 21

Arab countries besides France. Each year, it holds on its premises, near Notre-Dame cathedral, a large number of cultural activities highlighting the Arab heritage.

On his visit to Jordan last week, Mr Camille Cabana, the head of the institute and a special envoy of the French President Jacques Chirac, said "next year between March and September it will be Jordan's

turn to display to the world its cultural production." Cabana, who has been appointed a director of the institute seven months ago, said he visits Jordan frequently because this country has shown much enthusiasm in supporting the institute's activities and budget.

Cabana briefed the press last week on the upcoming activities in France. He said there will be three events, the first of which is a plastic art exhibition of Jordanian artists. The exhibition will be held in the Paris Municipality and sponsored by HM Queen and Mrs Bernadette Chirac. The second activity includes Jordanian handicrafts and traditional clothes. The last activity will

concentrate on the history of Jordan showing Jordanian antiquities besides the new French technology in this field. "This event is unique because it combines, along with the originality of the past, the innovative techniques of the present," said Cabana.

Cabana explained that his visit is aimed to prepare for next year's events in Paris. He wanted to settle down some financial problems concerning the transport of the antiquities to France and the kind and size of these antiquities. Mr Cabana delivered a message to HM King Hussein from President Chirac. That was in addition to several meetings with Jordanian officials. ■



American folklore in Jordan

AMERICAN FOLKLORE artists Saul Broudy and Bob Green came to Amman on 10-11 July to deliver America's favorite original musical selections in a performance titled "The Roots of American Culture."

With more than 40 years of experience, Broudy and Green perform classic blues, country, bluegrass and other traditional and contemporary forms of grassroots American music.

With dozens of recordings and hundreds of performances between them, you'll be taken back into the rich history of American folklore from where their special brand of music originates. Students of Yarmouk University in Irbid can see Broudy and Green on Wednesday, 10 July at 2:00 pm. In Amman, Broudy and Green will perform an outdoor concert at the American Embassy on Thursday, 11 July at 7:00 pm co-sponsored by the Fulbright Commission and the Marriott Hotel. ■



The folkloric singer Saul Broudy

Performing magic by natural means

By Harry Pullens
Special to The Star

The British-born illusionist Alan Shaxon is one of the top 10 after-dinner acts in the world according to the British magic magazine, *Abracadabra*. He has placed his audience far beyond his illusions by his remarkable performance.

In his performance at the Forte Grand Hotel within the British week, Shaxon put his audience in a state of perpetual astonishment taking them beyond the ordinary course of nature. Spectators were seen rubbing off their eyes again and again as if the sight in front of them was a work of imagination. The show left them in a deep awe as they tried continually to renew their amazement at his acts.

Shaxon's performance added a special flavour to the British week which ended recently. This conjuror, recognized by many Jordanians from one of Mr Bean shows, titled "Mr Bean Goes to Town" can be said to be as good a comedian as a conjuror. He proved himself as a comedian with his excellent sense of humor which constantly aroused wild laughter.

Looking back in time, Shaxon explained that his earliest interest in magic started at the age of 8. He performed his first magic act at the age of 12. He told *The Star* that, since boyhood he had kept reading books on magic when he was supposed to do his homework.

Shaxon said, "magic makes people see what is not happening, there's nothing supernatural about my magic." He added that it is a magic which is done by natural means, and since people like to be fooled, I have fun doing it."

For those who must have wondered

about his preternatural performance, he explained that, "if people think it is something else, that means I'm doing it rather well."

Shaxon who talked about his achievements in a modest way, has not the least aura of self-importance around himself. He is currently a Gold Star member of the exclusive Inner Magic Circle, and a recognized authority on things magical.

This experienced entertainer is of an engaging personality described to have lifted the art of magic to new heights of sophisticated illusion. His first major public appearance was in David Nixon TV shows at the age of 24, about 38 years ago.

"After this TV show, I got several phone calls and was given many offers. It would have been my hobby, but since I'm getting paid for it, it has become my work. I have ever since been on over 100 TV shows in different countries," said Shaxon.

Besides giving lectures and performing for his fellow magicians in Europe and America, he has also written two books on magic which he described as exclusive and too technical for a layman. In his impressive career which has spanned over several decades, he has been nominated as "lecturer of the Year" and "Visiting Magician of the Year" at the famous Magic Castle in Hollywood.

The illusionist said, as a child his idol was Robert Harkin, the once well-known British magician. "He was always my idol when I was a boy. I eventually got to work with him," he said. "I was fortunate to have inherited most of his tricks and equipment."



Shaxon is a member of a theatrical family. His two daughters, who once assisted him on stage, work in show business and are married to people in the same field.

His wide repertoire, ranging from large scale illusions to the more intimate realms of close-up magic, has enabled him to devise special presentations for small and large occasions.

When asked about the secret of his magic, he said that, "if we give away the secret, there's no mystery left. But my wife Ann, whom I have married for nearly 40 years and who has assisted me on-stage all the time, is the only one who knows the secret," he said.

Though the presentation of Shaxon is looked upon as classy and amusing, it is suitable for any occasion, whatever the condition. As a result of this unique distinction, he has been able to perform at most of the world's leading hotels and has appeared by Royal command at Buckingham Palace on four different occasions. ■

ER and Friends premiere on Orbit

THE ORBIT Satellite Television and Radio Network will be bringing its viewers the two top-rated prime time shows from America, premiering on 4 July. The situation comedy *Friends* and the hospital drama *ER* can be seen exclusively on America Plus, every Thursday at 5:00 pm GMT and 7:00 pm GMT respectively.

Friends is a half-hour, sophisticated comedy which explores the responsibilities that come with working and living in New York City. The bright and beautiful Monica (played by Courteney Cox), her rich roommate Rachel, her divorced brother Ross, his womanizing roommate Joey (Matt LeBlanc from *Melrose Place*), and the eternal visitor, sweet but flaky Phoebe, are the protagonists whose careers (or lack of) and love lives provide hilarious look at adulthood. The comedy looks at the anxieties and absurdities of a group of friends in their twenties where everything is possibly possible, with each other's friendship.

ER takes a fairly different tack, featuring the life and death decisions which must be taken in a hospital's emergency room and the stressful, but rewarding, career which affects the equally complicated private lives of its professionals, in and out of the hospital wards. This one-hour drama, created by the Harvard Medical School graduate, but better known novelist and filmmaker Michael Crichton, has been the highest-rated drama in the US for two years, capturing the attention of over 30 million viewers.

It is the dedicated passion of the family man Dr Mark Greene (Anthony Edwards), handsome Dr Douglas Ross (George Clooney from *Baby Talk*), tough and talented Dr Susan Lewis, difficult Nurse Hathaway, Medical student John Carter, and cocky surgical resident Dr Peter Benton (who can handle any emergency... just about!), which demonstrate how to make the most of the prevalent chaos in an urban, public hospital emergency room. ■

THE FAR SIDE

By GARY LARSON



"Dave! Ain't that your horse that kid is messin' with?"



"Well, Red Cloud, it just so happens I did go ask the chief! ... A bear claw necklace is a symbol of honor—a Grizzly Adams fingernail necklace is not!"



The perils of improper circling.



"So, Professor Sadowsky, you're saying that your fellow researcher, Professor Lazzell, knowing full well that baboons consider eye contact to be threatening, handed you this hat on that fateful day you emerged from your Serengeti campaign."

AGENDA

Exhibitions

■ An exhibition titled Heurix Dimanche, at The French Cultural Center, continues till 20 July
■ Ceramics exhibition at Jordan Design and Trade Center, continues till 25 July
■ Abstract plastic art exhibition by Arab women artists, at Baladna Art Gal-

Films

■ Danton, at the French Cultural Center, starts 8 July, Monday at 8 pm
■ The Silver Chair, at the British Cultural Center, 9 July, Tuesday at 5 pm
■ The Merry Mishaps of Mr Bean, at the British Cultural Center, 10 July, Wednesday at 7 pm

4 JULY 1996
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JULY 1996
A special section offering
fresh perspectives on
global issues prepared for
The Star

THE WORLD PAPER

PRINTED IN FIVE LANGUAGES
ON FIVE CONTINENTS

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After thousands of years, the world is on the verge of having a truly international language

Why English? Because it works

The sun has long since set on the British Empire, but it is a different story for the language of that empire. English is expanding its reach in dramatic fashion. Using the channels of business and cyberspace, the language is breaking free—and breaking over—cultural barriers

By Sally Weeks

FOR THE FIRST time in the history of civilization, we appear to be on the verge of having a genuine world language.

The spread of English throughout the planet has become an unprecedented linguistic phenomenon, "unique in the history of the world," says Brax B. Kachru, recognized internationally as one of the foremost authorities on the use of English.

No matter whose statistics one believes, it is clear that English now has more non-native speakers than native ones. Some estimates put the ratio at four-to-one in favor of the non-native speaker. It is a trend that often sparks debate—a debate fraught with emotions, political views and economic interests so intense that they have clouded recognition of what's truly going on out there in the linguistic world.

What's happening is that English indeed is becoming the international language—except that now it's "Englishes," says Kachru, editor of a series of books titled *English in the Global Context*. In a number of countries English has become virtually a local language. It often becomes a tool for different language factions within a nation to communicate effectively among themselves.

To Kachru, the use of English in Asian, African and Caribbean literatures

offers proof that the language is taking root and becoming a vehicle for the expression of local culture rather than just a convenient tongue for international communication.

Kachru's native India is one of the countries whose English has been studied most. The constitution there designates Hindi as official and English as the associate official language, elevating those two above the other 17 languages that are recognized (hundreds of other languages and dialects are not recognized nationally).

Malaysia, Pakistan, Nigeria, Kenya and the Philippines are among a host

of other nations often mentioned as having their own forms of English operating within the country. Hence the expressions "Malaysian English," "Nigerian English," and so on. In other countries—Japan, for example, and most of Latin America—English is widely taught for its usefulness as a window to the outside world but is not used as much internally.

Whatever the form English takes in each country, it all adds up to lots of English—according to some estimates more than US\$10 billion a year in worldwide business, including classes, textbooks and other learning aids.

Kachru's view of "world Englishes"

has been widely supported, but also much opposed, in part by so-called purists who feel the language will decay with too much local adaptation. Britain's Randolph Quirk—one of the preeminent experts on English and principal author of *Cambridge Grammar of Contemporary English*—believes there should be certain standards for all speakers of English. Even if such language planning were desirable, "it cannot be done effectively," Kachru says. "I'm not attaching a value judgment, just stating realities."

The English language, unlike French, Spanish and Italian, for example, has never had an official academy to determine what's acceptable in the language and what isn't. Attempts to form one have never been successful.

Kachru says one of the big fallacies in language thinking is the idea that native speakers somehow control their language. "Who owns English? If you can use it, you own it," he says, intentionally employing the word "use" rather than "speak."

Another fallacy is believing that people learn English in order to talk to

native speakers, or to somehow be part of a Western culture. Many English users, it appears, don't even think of English as a Western language anymore. "English is less and less regarded as a European language, and its development is less and less determined by the usage of its native speakers," wrote Stanford University's Charles A. Ferguson more than 15 years ago.

Ian Seaton, head of the British Council's "English 2000" initiative, gives the example of Eastern Europeans who flock to English classes but aren't concerned about what kind of accent they learn. "They're not too hung up on the variety of English," he says. "They're not seeking to become little Brits or little Canadians."

Although many students of English do work on improving their accents, a foreign accent is not the disadvantage it once was. Even in broadcasting—where "BBC English" or "standard American" traditionally were required—CNN International has shown that reporters with foreign accents can be an asset. Indeed, CNN's Christiane Amanpour is one of the top stars of international broadcasting today and is being wooed by the US networks despite her obvious non-American pronunciation. Her accent is considered attractive.

A very big part of the world's English-speaking activity takes place completely within the realm of non-native speakers. The late Peter Strevens, a professor at Cambridge University in the UK who wrote about the rise of world Englishes, predicted this development: "English will be taught mostly by non-native speakers of the language, to non-native speakers, in order to communicate mainly with non-native speakers."

Some language authorities argue that the whole concept of the native speaker is no longer meaningful. Kachru tends to think in terms of multilingual societies where most citizens speak several languages, English being a key one.

One of the major arguments against English becoming the favored global language is that its colonial past makes it a poor candidate for a neutral international tongue.

Although this argument has a certain intellectual appeal, it doesn't correspond much to reality. For example, as Britain's former colonies gained independence, there were predictions that use of English would decline. Some linguists say that the opposite occurred: once it wasn't the language of the colonial power, English became more acceptable as a local vehicle for communication. "The sun now sets on the British Empire, but never on the English language," the linguists are fond of saying.

The colonial history of English, of course, is to a great extent responsible for the language getting planted around the world, but authorities say its growth in more recent times stems from its use in technology and science, advertising, pop music, international business in general, and various cooperative efforts among countries such as air-traffic control and the work of the United Nations and its agencies.

Still, the use of English is often condemned by politicians in many countries. Kachru dismisses such attacks out of hand: "We shouldn't take it too seriously when an Indian politician says to throw English into the sea. It means nothing. He still puts his children in an English-language school."

Kachru, although saying he is a student rather than a promoter of the unique phenomenon of English as a world language, clearly sees benefits of English taking root in different countries. It becomes a medium, he says, for expressing local culture in a way that

others can understand.

"English has become a repository of multiculturalism," he says. "It is an immense resource that has not been explored and taken advantage of."

Larry E. Smith of Honolulu's East-West Center agrees. "The spread of English is not a homogenizing factor which causes cultural differences to disappear," he writes, "but the use of English offers a medium to express and explain these differences."

Whether English is intrinsically the best language for this purpose is much debated, but some would say a moot point.

Joshua A. Fishman of Yeshiva University in New York has addressed this point, noting that many people consider French, for example, as more beautiful, musical, pleasant, refined, graceful.

"But the real powerhouse is still English," Fishman concludes. "It doesn't have to worry about being loved because, loved or not, it works. It makes the world go round." ☐

SALLY WEEKS, A FORMER MANAGING EDITOR OF *The Daily Journal* IN VENEZUELA, IS *The World Paper's* CONTRIBUTING EDITOR.

Meeting Asia's demand

Australia trades on its language

By Andrew Clark

AFTER YEARS OF cultivating its traditional ties to Britain and strong defense links with the United States, Australia in the 1970s changed its strict immigration rules that kept out an exploding Asian population and began shaping its foreign policy more around regional cooperation. As a result, the world's smallest continent is rapidly becoming enmeshed with Asia, and the bulk of its trade is with the Asia-Pacific region.

One of the most lucrative and significant offshoots of this change in direction is Australia's export of the English language into Asia. Increasingly, Australian universities are providing educational infrastructure to Southeast Asia, consolidating an industry that adds \$1.5 billion (US\$1.25 billion) a year to the country's trade balance.

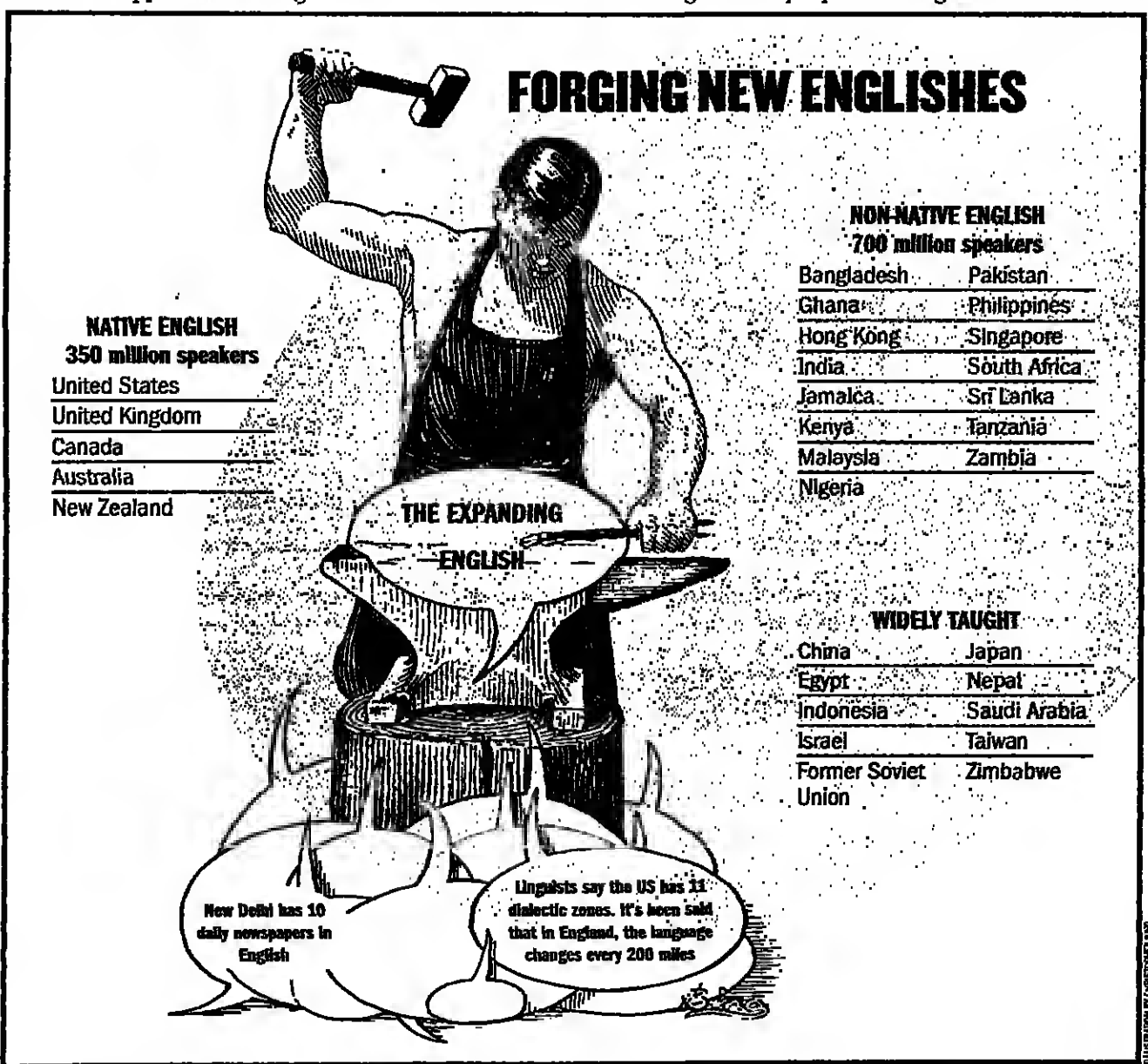
The overseas business arm of Australia's universities, the International Development Programme, is establishing new facilities for teaching English in Laos and Vietnam to supplement those already operating in Cambodia, Indonesia and Thailand. These facilities are seen by the Australian government as a key method of enmeshing Australian universities in the business activities of the region.

While the value of these offshore activities are difficult to gauge, they do form healthy income streams for a university sector that is searching for new sources of funding. At the same time, these outreach programs act as a reinforcement mechanism for the thousands of Asian university students now studying in Australia.

Universities are aware of this need to sell their services overseas. A number of institutions now operate campuses in Southeast Asia through twinning arrangements, and advanced information technology is making these long-distance education programs easier to set up and operate.

Commercially driven institutions such as Monash University, located in

▶ TRADING ON LANGUAGE PAGE 2



Online is monolingual

Will Java unlock the Net?

By Francis Pisani

ENGLISH IS THE undisputed king in cyberspace—at least for the moment. When, how and if this situation will change is a subject of speculation.

"A lingua franca is needed, just as it is needed for airplane pilots, and until Esperanto becomes popular I suspect that English will continue to hold its present position," writes Donald Fangler, professor of Russian literature at Harvard University.

Fangler is one of 35 Internet users in a number of countries who were informally polled in June about their view of English's dominance. "The Internet only reflects the state of the world," answered Roland Cayrol, a political science professor in Paris. Argentine photographer Omar Torres sees it "rather as a solution than as a problem."

A number of factors led to the current state of affairs. The Internet was born in the United States, and English was already common in the scientific community. The language has legitimacy and is practical. "For the Net, it is a much better vehicle" than other languages, writes Lynne Terry, correspondent in Paris for NPR, a US public radio network. "More direct. Punchier. Quicker."

Lucy Conger, a US journalist, puts it even more bluntly. "Is anybody but a Frenchman surprised by this?" she asks the French-born writer who is doing the poll. "If Japanese was the lingua franca of the Internet, now that would be a problem!"

At the very least, it would be a problem for a greater number of people. English is the official or semi-official language in 70 countries that are home to 1.4 billion people. "I feel more comfortable in English than in Hindi or Bengali," comments Rishab Aiyer Gbosh, editor of *The Indian Technomist*.

But the dominance of English is a concern for many. "It becomes a factor of exclusion," says Carmen Gomez Mont, dean of the communications department at the Universidad Iberoamericana in Mexico. Journalist Bernard Cassen concurs, writing in the May issue of *Le Monde Diplomatique*: "Everybody is equal on the Internet, if anglophone."

Access is one of the most important issues of cyberspace. Access is limited by money, knowledge and the capacity to write and understand English to an "elite of elites," as a young Mexican correspondent says. There is also the fear of unifying of the world's languages. Alberto Cecchi, Italian professor and hypertext author, answered the poll with a question: "How many kinds of watermelons were there 100 years ago? Thirty. How many are there today? Four."

Even if there were broad agreement to use multiple languages on the Internet, there are technical problems. The basic character set used for e-mail is ASCII, which only permits plain English characters—no accents and, of course, no Kanji or any other writing system.

"Names are massacred and words lose their meanings," regrets Valia Kaimaki, a Greek currently studying in France. The situation is slowly changing as more servers use MIME, an e-mail protocol which allows more character sets.

The World Wide Web does better. It uses ISO Latin 1, a norm which allows the representation of 14 languages. Not enough, but it's progress. Some companies offer multilingual Web browsers which altogether can handle some 30 languages, including Russian, Greek, Japanese, Arabic and Hebrew, and some less known like Amarico, Kimbundu and Sangho.

The Web may actually be a life buoy for some of the world's endangered languages. Already one can find Web sites in Ojibwa (a Native American language of the US Great Lakes region), Maori, Klingon (for *Star Trek* freaks) and many others, allowing

scattered communities to communicate in their own tongue.

Willi Gernund, a German journalist working in India, argues that the Internet can expand "only if it finds a way to regionalize itself according to existing languages." Bernard Cassen points out the problem of critical mass—2 million potential users are necessary for the emergence of non-English commercial tools. "Japan has already crossed this threshold, but French-speaking countries have not," he writes.

Nicholas Negroponte, head of the Media Lab at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, is one of those who trusts the nature of the Web, writing in *Wired* magazine that English as a lingua franca should not be confused with cultural identity.

"It is not possible to colonialize the Net and turn its users into English-speaking puppets in the way France turned 46 other regions or nations, each with its own indigenous languages, into French-speaking colonies," he writes.

Paul Saffo, director of the Institute for the Future, believes domination by English is only temporary. "Multilingual home pages are coming everywhere," he says. Indeed, the true im-

Exporting English textbooks and classes is a huge business for Britain—more than a US\$1.5 billion a year

▶ UNLOCKING THE NET PAGE 2

"Chinglish" can draw on over 200 million students

Career-minded Chinese send Russian to the back of the class

By Xie Jinjin

ONE OUT OF every six Chinese is studying English. It adds up to more than 200 million people in China taking English courses—with the blessing of their government.

There are many types of students, from the children who all take English at school to the adults who watch language programs on television. The government encourages everyone, says Cen Jianjun, director of a foreign languages division within the State Education Commission. "English as an international language has become an indispensable tool for the Chinese people to communicate with the world," he says.

Most Chinese children begin learning English in the fourth year of primary school, and they continue taking classes until they complete their formal education. English is one of the major subjects, along with Chinese and mathematics, in both general high schools and vocational schools. It's essential for most of the students who want to go on to college.

That this has become a virtual requirement reflects progress in China's English teaching, Cen says. Before 1983, although planners valued English, many high schools did not provide courses and even when they did, the level of teaching was low, making it impossible to require high scores on college-entrance tests, he said. This

has changed.

At the university level, of the nearly three million undergraduate students in China, about 60,000 are majoring in English education and another 50,000 in English language and literature, Cen says. English courses are required of students in most other specialties, both at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

English is also offered for adults at spare-time universities, and at correspondence universities through TV and radio across China.

Altogether 37 foreign languages are taught in China, including Russian, Japanese, German, French, Spanish and Arabic. Those who study a language other than English account for a minority, although they can enter college as long as they pass examinations in the language they learned.

Russian was popular in China in the 1950s because the newly founded People's Republic relied heavily on the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe for technology and trade, Cen said. But even then Russian was not taught in primary schools. When Sino-Soviet relations deteriorated in the early 1960s, English got the upper hand, and the momentum became overwhelming in the 1980s, he said.

In the 1990s, with improved relations between Russia and China, Russian classes have picked up somewhat, especially in Heilongjiang in the northeast, which borders far east Russia and trades heavily with it.

Of the various language classes, however, opportunities for learning English are the most abundant. For those who haven't learned English at

school, the country's 650 television stations offer daily programs aimed at everyone from kindergartners to senior citizens. China Central Television, which reaches 70 percent of China's 1.2 billion people, alone has released 60 English teaching programs in the past 15 years.

DEFINING A GLOBAL LANGUAGE

► One out of five of the world's population speak English to some level of competence. Demand from the other four-fifths is increasing.

► There are more than 1.5 billion people living in countries where English has official status.

► By the year 2000 it is estimated that over one billion people will be learning English.

► Over two-thirds of the world's scientists read in English.

► Three quarters of the world's mail is written in English.

► 80% of the world's electronically stored information is in English

SOURCE: ENGLISH 8000 FACTS AND FIGURES BY THE BRITISH COUNCIL

China also publishes more than 200 English-language periodicals, including many in the sciences such as *China Medical Journal* and *Chinese Science Academy*. There is the China Daily newspaper group, which produces *China Daily*, *Shanghai Star*, the weekly *21st Century* and *Beijing Weekend*.

For those who want something less high-brow, there are publications for average

English students, including *World of English*, a monthly bilingual magazine in English and Chinese with a circulation of 200,000. "The articles are all selected from foreign newspapers," says Chen Yulun, founder and editor of the popular English reader. "A group of college professors put them into Chinese and annotate wherever necessary."

Even some regular Chinese newspapers run columns in English. The *Beijing Youth Daily*, with a circulation of 200,000, has had a weekly English-Chinese bilingual column named *English Green* since 1993.

There are various reasons for the eagerness to learn English, most of them related to work and career. Ma Yuhong, a 25-year-old accountant for a small garment shop in Beijing, spent three years—one afternoon and four evenings every week—studying foreign trade accounting at the Beijing General Vocational University in order to get a better job.

TRADING ON LANGUAGE

Continued from page 1

the southern state of Victoria, have been particularly influential in developing this type of education. Monash has formal exchange agreements or close links with more than a dozen universities and educational institutions around the world. These include Peking University in China, University of the Philippines, Yonsei University in Korea, the Chinese University of Hong Kong and Gadjah University in Indonesia.

Monash sees Malaysia as the strongest market for Australian educational products. The university has an arrangement with Sunway College in Petaling Jaya, a thriving business district about seven miles from the center of Kuala Lumpur, under which Sunway students take the first year of their bachelor of law course in Malaysia before coming to Australia to complete the degree. Monash has also established a separate business school in Kuala Lumpur in conjunction with a local company, Malaysian Strategic Consultancy Sdn Bhd. For second-tier universities, this form of overseas expansion offers both international prestige and the possibility of additional cash flow.

The smaller University of Wollongong, located in a coastal steel-producing city 70 miles south of Sydney, has a successful literacy education program for teachers. Entitled *Frameworks*, it is a cooperative venture between the uni-

versity's business arm and a vocational education center in western New York State in the US.

Other overseas education initiatives undertaken by Australian universities and colleges are less formal, and are geared towards establishing greater ties with Asian countries. Student teachers from the University of Technology in Sydney, for example, take part in an annual exchange program with Thailand that is now in its 18th year. Project Pranokorn, as the program is known, will place 34 student teachers in Bangkok schools this month. The students, all in their third year of a Bachelor of Teaching degree course, will be teaching English as a second language to Thai primary school students.

A number of legal changes by the Australian government over the past three years have helped the English-as-export drive. After years of bureaucratic wrangling, visa requirements for overseas students have been reformed and other changes made to improve the image of Australian education in those countries targeted as possible export markets. Mainland China, Taiwan and Vietnam appear to be bright spots for the future.

For Australia the drive to export English makes sense on several fronts: foreign policy, economic growth, forging business ties and good will. □

ANDREW CLARK, *The WorldPaper's* ASSOCIATE EDITOR FOR AUSTRALIA, IS EDITOR OF THE Sydney-based *Sun Herald*.



"And my government approves!": one out of every six Chinese studies English

"Half of my classmates had a full-time job and were studying while working, and they were well over 30 years old. They studied the hard way," Ma said.

For 22-year-old Wang Dachun, a junior at Beijing Polytechnic University, English is a must because he plans to pursue a Master's degree in the United States. He planned to take the TOEFL test for English proficiency this spring and the GRE—the exam required for most graduate schools in the United States—in October. Wang noted that there were so many young people registering for the TOEFL exam, he had to queue up overnight.

Government leaders encourage study of English, but they are concerned about the level of instruction and the shortage of qualified teachers.

Many college graduates find it hard to speak well or comprehend native English speakers. Some specialists in the field have complained that what is taught in Chinese schools is just "mute English" or, worse, "Chinglish," as pidgin English is called.

To remedy this, the government invites about 30,000 teachers from English-speaking countries to work in China each year, according to Cen. Many offer to work in such remote areas as Tibet and Qinghai. Also, hundreds of training centers have been set up to improve the skills of high school English teachers.

China's official language is Chinese, although more than a dozen of the country's 55 ethnic minorities have their own written language. The government encourages each group to

teach its own language in local schools, but promotes Mandarin Chinese—Pu Tong Hua—to facilitate communication among ethnic groups.

Foreigners are welcome to study Mandarin, says Peng Hengli, director of the Center of Testing of Mandarin as a Foreign Language, known as "HSK." Some 40,000 foreign students are expected to study in China this year.

China has set up 16 overseas HSK test centers in the United States, Canada, Australia, Britain, France, Italy, Germany, Russia and some Asian countries, and it sponsors one examination a year, Peng said. More and more foreigners are studying Mandarin and plan to take HSK tests.

This past January, 45,000 students from 115 countries took the HSK test. Perhaps one day it will be like the TOEFL—foreign students will have to stand in line overnight to sign up for the HSK. □

XIE JINJIN IS A WRITER FOR THE BEIJING-BASED *China Features*, A DIVISION OF THE XINHUA NEWS AGENCY.

UNLOCKING THE NET

Continued from page 1

pact of the Internet on languages might be to encourage bilingualism, even multilingualism.

Natural language aside, there are those who would argue that the real lingua franca of cyberspace is the hypertext markup language—HTML—which allows computers with different operating systems to communicate. Tomorrow it might be a new language, Java.

Even natural languages, including or perhaps especially English, seem to be mutating. Michael Joyce, a professor of English at Vassar College in the US, doesn't necessarily view this as a bad thing. "Beyond encouraging vernacular Web sites and such, the approach I would recommend is pidginization, the conscious intermingling of linguistic streams across Web pages," he says.

This "pidginization" is similar to the art form practiced by many Third World as well as US minority writers who use the dominant language in their own way and hybridize it. □

FRANCIS PISANI IS A FREE-LANCE WRITER WHO, AFTER LIVING IN MEXICO FOR 16 YEARS, IS MOVING TO SAN FRANCISCO TO COVER INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES.

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THE WORLD PAPER
Published by World Times, Inc.
210 World Trade Center
Boston, MA 02210 USA
Tel: (617) 439-5400 Fax: (617) 439-5415
email: 74372.2136@compuserve.com
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The Star's TV GUIDE

Programs on JTV from 6-12 July

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Cinema

"THE ARISTOCATS" (Disney, \$26.99): The animated 1970 Disney classic about adventurous felines — in which Walt Disney himself had a major hand creatively — deals with a cat (voiced by Eva Gabor) who's left a fortune by a Frenchwoman. However, a sinister butler plots to take the inheritance; among the others heard as characters are Phil Harris, Hermoine Baddeley, Scatman Crothers and ventriloquist Paul Winchell. *** (G)

"THE BOYS OF ST. VINCENT" (New Yorker, \$89.95): Based on an actual situation at a Catholic-run Newfoundland orphanage, this Canadian, made-for-television 1993 drama has an immediate international impact. Henry Czerny ("Clear and Present Danger") stars as a temperamental clergyman at the center of a controversy revolving around the alleged abuse of the young male orphans. **** (Not rated: AS, P, V)

HELD OVER: "TO DIE FOR" (Columbia/TriStar, \$100.71): Nicole Kidman — alias Mrs. Tom Cruise — earned her best reviews to date for her performance in director Gus Van Sant's ("Drugstore Cowboy") satirical and rather dark comedy. She plays an alluring TV weathercaster who manipulates an enamored teen-ager (Joaquin Phoenix) and several of his friends into helping her dispose of her husband. *** (R: AS, P, V)

"MRS. MURKIN" (Republic, \$96.16): Diane Ladd is the screenwriter, director and star of this made-for-showtime drama, about a widow who agrees to care for her ailing father-in-law (Bruce Dern, Ladd's real-life ex-husband). The offer isn't as generous as it seems: He's the man who broke her heart when they had an affair while she was a teen-ager. Kelly Preston plays the lady in flashbacks. *** (R: AS, P, V)

"PERSUASION" (Columbia/TriStar, \$97.51): Produced in association with PBS' "Masterpiece Theatre" anthology, director Roger Michell's elegantly filmed, widely acclaimed version of the classic novel by Jane Austen ("Sense and Sensibility") brings the financially plagued daughter (Amanda Root) of an aristocrat back together with her former fiancé (Clare Hinds) in 19th-century England. *** (PG: AS, P)

COMING SOON: "TOM AND HUCK" (Disney, May 1): Jonathan Taylor Thomas ("Home Improvement") and Brad Renfro ("The Client") play Mark Twain's youthful adventures. (PG)

"CARRINGTON" (PolyGram, May 7): Emma Thompson and Jonathan Pryce star in the true story of painter Dora Carrington's passion for a homosexual writer. (R)

"IT TAKES TWO" (Warner, May 7): Popular young "Full House" twins Mary-Kate and Ashley Olsen play, of all things, exact look-alikes: Kirstie Alley also stars. (PG)

"THE AMERICAN PRESIDENT" (Columbia/TriStar, May 14): Michael Douglas plays the widowed leader of the United States and Annette Bening is his new love interest. (PG-13)

FAMILY VIEWING GUIDE KEY: AS, adult situations; N, nudity; P, profanity; V, violence; GV, particularly graphic violence.

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ENGLISH PROGRAMS

SATURDAY

3:00—Moomin
3:30—Pumpkin Patch
4:00—Blue Heelers
4:40—Big Brother Jake
5:00—French programs
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—Torkelsons
8:00—The Album Show
8:55—Prism
9:10—Miami Vice
10:00—News at Ten
10:25—The Bold and the Beautiful
11:10—Feature Film: *Rayan's Daughter*, 2nd part starring Robert Mithum and Sarah Miles.
The film is about a young girl who gets married to an older teacher and then she starts to feel frustrated.

SUNDAY

3:00—The Mask
3:30—Mac and Muttley
4:00—Bush School
4:10—Italian Soccer
5:00—News Flash
5:01—French Programs
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—Cinema, Cinema, Cinema
8:00—The American Chart Show
8:45—Fresh Prince of Bel-Air
9:10—Black's Magic
10:00—News at Ten
10:25—Fatal Return (part I).

MONDAY

3:00—Bonkers
3:30—Riehl Rieb
3:45—Play About
4:00—Gillette World Sport
4:30—Bustin Loose
5:00—News Flash
5:01—French Programs
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—Milner Fenwick
8:00—Paul McKenna Show
8:30—Matlock
9:10—100 Years of Capitalism in Korea
10:00—News at Ten
10:25—The Bold and the Beautiful
11:15—Mancuso

TUESDAY

3:00—Iris, the Happy Professor
3:15—Captain Planet
3:30—Hot Shots
4:00—Bob Morrison Show
4:30—ALF
5:00—News Flash
5:01—French Programs
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—Blossom
8:00—Documentary
8:30—Encounter
9:10—Star Trek
10:30—News at Ten
10:30—Human Target
11:15—Hawai 5-0
11:45—My Two Wives

WEDNESDAY

3:00—Flint Stones
3:30—Iris
3:45—Bill Nye the Science Guy
4:00—Kelly



NBA Games, Thursday at 3:30 pm

5:00—News Flash
5:01—French Programs
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—Evening Shade
8:00—Super Stars of Action
8:30—Chancer
9:10—Hunter
10:00—News at Ten
10:25—The Bold and the Beautiful
11:15—Bugs

THURSDAY

3:00—Double Dragon
3:30—NBA
4:00—Pirates
5:00—News Flash
5:01—French Programs
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—Growing Pains
8:00—Nasty Boys
8:45—Secret Weapons
9:10—The Wanderer
10:00—News at Ten

8:00—Taratata
9:10—Star Trek
10:00—News at Ten
10:25—Feature Film: *The Diamond Fleece*, starring Ben Cross and Tony Rosato.
The story is about a prisoner who gets out and is employed.

FRIDAY

3:30—Dumb and Dumber
3:15—Bus School
4:00—Gillette World Sport
4:10—Crystal Muzé
5:00—News Flash
5:01—French Programs
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—Growing Pains
8:00—Nasty Boys
8:45—Secret Weapons
9:10—The Wanderer
10:00—News at Ten

10:30—Classic Movie

PROGRAMMES EN FRANÇAIS

SAMEDI

5:00—Dessins animés
Les mystères de la vie
5:15—Emission jeunesse
La vie devant moi
5:30—Jeux
Que le meilleur gagne
6:00—Série
Château Vallon
7:00—Le Journal
7:15—Faut pas rêver
Sainte-Hélène

DIMANCHE

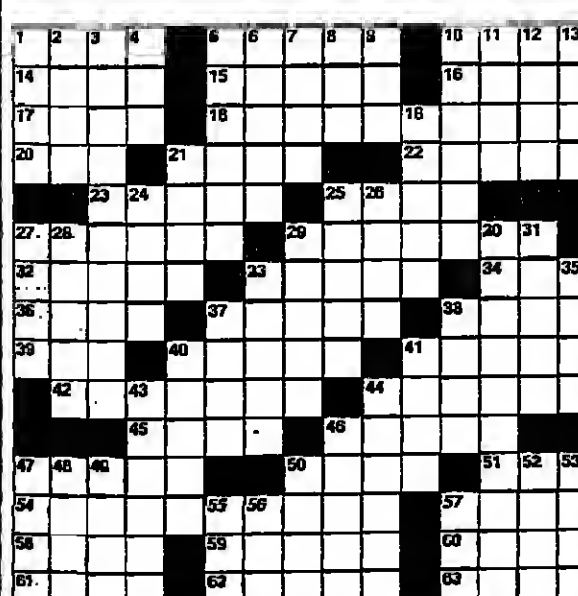
5:00—Dessins animés
Les survivants
5:15—Emission jeunesse
La vie devant moi
5:30—Jeux
Que le meilleur gagne
6:00—Magazine
Envoyé spécial
La violence à New York, La vie avant la vie
7:00—Le Journal
7:15—Magazine
Sports et musique

LUNDI

5:00—Dessins animés
Ordy
5:15—Divertissement
L'école des fans
Best of
6:00—Magazine
Thalassa
7:00—Le Journal
7:15—Magazine
Cinq sur cinq

Programs are subject to change by JTV

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



ACROSS
1. Elementary
10. Window frame
14. Baking chamber
15. Earlier in time
16. Lily plant
17. Heavy metal
18. Teacher
20. Carved portion
21. Brief look
22. Disposed of
23. Salacious
25. Cabinet
27. White
32. Moved back
33. Movie performer
34. Present time
36. Food
37. Park (up)

DOWN
1. Soft drink
2. Declares positively
3. Georgia
4. Terminate
5. Lines of talk
6. Buffalo
7. Pearl
8. Obtained
9. Make a mistake
10. Holy
11. Singing
12. Presently
13. At this place
14. Before case or class
15. Parched
16. Lyric poems
17. Command
18. Single time
19. Comedian
20. Sati
21. Floor
22. Hair
23. Nautical cry
24. Graves
25. Religious image
26. Ship of wood
27. Pungent
28. "Bolo"
29. Registration
30. Dranch
31. Donates
32. Useless plant
33. Rounded part
34. Phone charge
40. Stairway part
41. Servant
43. Most attractive
44. In good spirits
45. Healed
47. School dance
46. Change the decor
49. Mimic
50. Travel
52. With the bow
53. Profound
55. Weight
56. Metallic earth
57. Distress signal

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—THIS WEEK'S— HOROSCOPE

By Linda Black

Weekly Tip: If changes need to be made in your living arrangements, make them now.

Aries (March 21-April 19). Stay home as much as possible to avoid hassles. Call in sick, too; you need the rest. Get a friend to cover for you.

Taurus (April 20-May 20). Do more research on whatever it is you're thinking about buying, and go get it. Entertain at home.

Gemini (May 21-June 21). You're sharper now, so get up early. You'll feel the pinch; your money doesn't quite stretch far enough. Hide out to save.

Cancer (June 22-July 22). Stop by the necessary bureaucracies and finish incomplete paperwork. Play with your friends as much as possible, but don't make commitments.

Leo (July 23-Aug. 23). Meet with friends and romance could follow. Finish overdue tasks. These are not easy days. A supervisor makes tough demands.

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You may develop a crush on a cheerful supervisor. Don't take it too far, but enjoy yourself. Travel with friends.

Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). You're brilliant. If you want to argue with the boss' do it. These are good days for team efforts.

Scorpio (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Buy something nice for your sweetheart. Plan a trip and study foreign languages. Make tough decisions.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). An argument could lead to romance. Opposites do attract, you know. Don't spend now; wait and get a better deal.

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). You're lucky in love, but you have to take care of business, too. Discuss a partnership but don't solidify the deal yet.

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Schedule a breakfast date. Work hard. Finish the old and start the new. Competition's fierce. You'll need a good partner to win.

Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20). These days are good for romance. You'll have to work hard at work, though, 'cause lots of things are coming soon.

If You're Having a Birthday This Week: Finish up previous requirements — don't change horses in the middle of the stream. Stick close to home this year. Fix it up or buy new.

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Bridge

Why Guess?
By Tannah Hirsch

Neither vulnerable. South deals.
NORTH
♠ 7
♥ 9 7 5 3
♦ K Q 10 8 7
♣ J 9 3

WEST
♠ 8 6 3
♥ Q J 10 6
♦ J 9 5
♣ K 7 4

EAST
♠ 10 5
♥ A K 4 2
♦ A 3
♣ 10 8 6 5 2

SOUTH
♠ A K Q J 9 4 2
♥ 8
♦ 6 4 2
♣ A Q

The bidding:
South West North East
1♠ Pass 1NT Pass
4♠ Pass

Opening lead: Queen of ♠
South, declarer at ♣ spades, uncovered a line that would have succeeded three times out of four, or even with a better guess. What a pity declarer overlooked an approach that would have guaranteed the contract no matter how the cards lay!

With 8 1/2 playing tricks and the master suit, there was absolutely no need for South to preempt. The final

contract of four spades was impeccable.

West led the queen of hearts and continued the suit when East echoed with the four, declarer ruffing. Trumps were drawn and a diamond was led to the king, which was allowed to hold. A club to the queen lost to the king, and West continued the good work of the defense by reverting to the nine of diamonds.

Obviously, had declarer finessed the ten, all would have been well. But since East had already shown up with the ace-king of hearts, declarer elected to place West with the ace of diamonds, and rose with the queen. That lost to the ace, and declarer still had an unavoidable diamond loser.

All those possibilities blinded declarer to the winning line. After drawing trumps, declarer should simply have led the ace and queen of clubs. West can win with the king, but the jack of clubs on the table is now a winner.

When declarer regains the lead, a diamond to the king guarantees the contract. Declarer must get to the board with a diamond, and then a diamond can be discarded on the high club. Declarer loses just one trick in each suit except trumps.

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Jumble

Unscramble these four words, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

LEDIY
NALUN
GIXNIF
HARTEG



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Print answer here: ○○○○○○○○○

Answers: YIELD ANNUL FIXING GATHER
Unscrambled: HOW THE HANDYMAN'S SHODDY WORK LEFT THE HOME OWNER

Words of Wisdom

It's better to say what's on your mind than to stew silently.

Disillusionment is the beginning of wisdom.

We are most unhappy when we don't know what we want and still try to get it.

Success depends on your point of view.

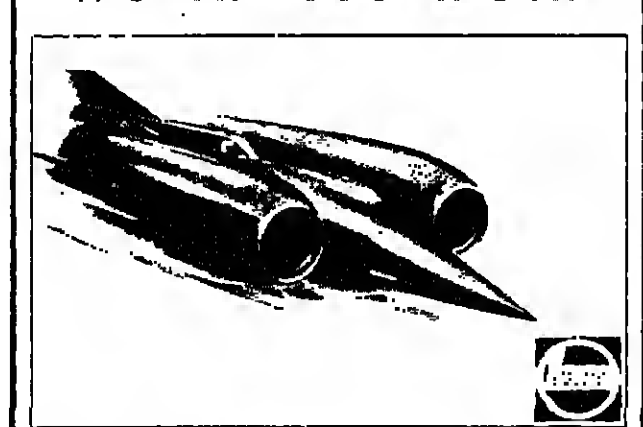
The possible becomes so only after the impossible is attempted.

Character is an achievement, not a gift of nature.

Acts of kindness may not receive a lot of attention at the time, but they are never forgotten.

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Welcome for Castrol sponsored world record bid



HIS MAJESTY King Hussein has given royal support to the efforts of the Castrol-sponsored attempt to set a new world land speed record.

The King has agreed to the British designed and built Thrust Super Sonic Car being tested in the Al Jafra desert in western Jordan in July.

A message from His Majesty to the team, the first to prepare a car to travel faster than the speed of sound, was delivered to a London conference by HRH Prince Feisal.

The Prince said "I believe the conditions will be very conducive to the work of the team and we look forward to helping in the preparation of the car for its world record attempt."

Al Jafra was chosen by the head of the Thrust SSC project, current world land speed record holder Richard Noble, after he had scoured three continents and visited 14 other sites to find suitable conditions.

He said "the situation at Al Jafra is superb. We are close to a Royal Jordanian Air Force base which offers both accommodation and access and we have a track of more than 10 miles (16 kms) of very hard, very flat surface on which to run."

The surface of the Al Jafra is expected to offer much better grip than sand or salt when Thrust SSC, driven by British Air Force officer Andy Green, carries out trial runs. The testing of the win jet engine powered car will be the build up to September's scheduled attempt to beat Richard Noble's current world record of 633.48 mph (1019.44 kph).

Richard Noble hopes to see Thrust SSC raise the record to over 850 mph (1368 kph).

Castrol have sponsored a lot of the research and development work for Thrust SSC and will be providing lubricants for the Rolls Royce jet engines as well as for the bearings in the aluminium alloy wheels which will rotate at 8500 rpm and have a massive heat build up.

Specially designed lubricants will be used to maintain the efficiency and peak performance of each of the 25000 lb (11340 kg) thrust of the twin jet engines and ensure that the wheel bearings play their vital role.

As long ago as 1922, Castrol provided the lubricant for KL Guinness to set a land speed record at just over 100 mph (160 kph). In the following 16 years the record was broken on 22 occasions, 18 times with the help of Castrol, including such famous drivers as George Eyston and Sir Malcolm Campbell.

Castrol is the principal company of the Lubricants division of the Burmah Castrol group and produces a wide range of industrial, automotive, marine and specialist products in over 50 countries worldwide.

Richard Noble said "Attempts on the world land speed record are not just expensive showpiece spectacles, the research and development and the knowledge that is gained all help improve many aspects of engineering."

John Elliott, managing director of Castrol Middle East said "Castrol are delighted to be involved once again with Noble."

Le Jourdain

Supplément en français du Star

Des voix israéliennes pour la levée du bouclage

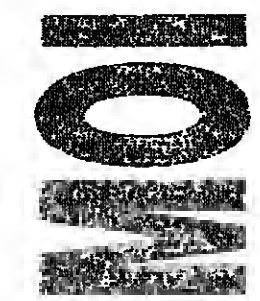
Plusieurs responsables israéliens se sont prononcés ces derniers jours en faveur de l'allègement du bouclage des territoires palestiniens décidé après la série d'attentats qui a frappé Israël entre le 25 février et le 4 mars.

Le premier a été Gideon Ezra, conseiller du nouveau Premier ministre Benjamin Netanyahu et ancien chef adjoint du service de sécurité intérieure. «Je pense que le bouclage n'a atteint pas les objectifs affichés. A mon avis, il faut le lever sur-le-champ. Le bouclage n'a que des effets purement psychologiques», a-t-il déclaré sur les ondes de la radio publique. Faisant allusion à la détresse économique qui existe dans les territoires depuis que le bouclage a été décidé, il a ajouté: «Je pense que les Arabes de Cisjordanie et de Gaza doivent accéder aux sources de leur subsistance.»

Depuis l'élection du 29 mai, les Israéliens assurent avoir assoupli le bouclage, affirmant désormais laisser entrer environ 27 000 travailleurs chaque jour en Israël. L'armée israélienne demande elle aussi qu'un allègement substantiel du bouclage ait lieu. Des responsables militaires ont demandé au ministre de la Défense Yitzhak Mordechai de doubler le nombre des travailleurs palestiniens autorisés à travailler en Israël.

Pour le 14 juillet, le Star vous ouvre ses pages.
Un supplément spécial en français sera réalisé à l'occasion de la fête nationale de la France.
Une place spéciale est réservée aux entreprises souhaitant profiter de cette opportunité pour faire de la publicité.
Pour tout renseignement, contactez Olivier Bras au Star.
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SELON



La puissance de l'Etat hébreu provient de la réunion d'un ensemble de facteurs qu'on ne peut pas concevoir séparément: l'unité du peuple juif, la faiblesse des Arabes, l'impact laissé par les crimes nazis sur l'ensemble de l'opinion mondiale, l'appui américain inconditionnel et enfin l'intelligence exploitation de ces facteurs par le lobby juif international afin de mener à bien le plan conçu à Bâle en 1897.

Peut-on parler aujourd'hui d'unité nationale en Israël? La ségrégation raciale entre les différentes composantes de la société, l'étouffante oppression des arabes israéliens sur la vie quotidienne des Israéliens modernes, le rôle grandissant des extrémistes dans l'appareil étatique sont les signes alarmants d'une société qui se fissure.

D'autres éléments contribuent à lézarder cette société. Bientôt, 20% des ressortissants israéliens seront d'origine arabe. Et quand on constate que certains députés d'origine russe parlent à peine l'hébreu, on peut se poser des questions sur l'avenir de ce pays que plusieurs bombes à retardement menacent.

L'âge d'or qu'a connu Israël grâce à sa position au sein d'une région dévorée par l'ennemi communiste fait désormais partie des vieux souvenirs. La région appartient aujourd'hui aux Américains qui possèdent des bases militaires dans la plupart des pays du Moyen-Orient et qui ont mis la main sur les ressources qui donnent à cette région tant d'importance. Israël, arrière-garde de l'Occident, a dorénavant des concurrents arabes plus offensifs et moins égoïstes.

La crise économique dont souffre le monde frappe aussi les Etats-Unis. Jusqu'à quand pourront-ils continuer à verser plusieurs milliards de dollars chaque année pour aider Israël? D'autre part, le vote juif perd de son influence outre-atlantique avec la montée du vote des communautés arabes, sud-américaines, asiatiques ou noires.

A côté des Arabes qui continuent à entretenir brillamment leurs divisions et leurs faiblesses, les abus commis par les Israéliens dans le monde commencent à provoquer certaines interrogations. Les milliers de morts dus au raids israéliens, les camps d'horreur au Sud-Liban, les généraux souillés de sang et les fanatiques haineux réveillent des souvenirs vieux d'un demi-siècle.

Face à une attitude arabe modérée, pacifiste et réaliste, les Israéliens se montrent plus ironiques que jamais et sa composition d'une manière orgueilleuse et dépourvue de toute sagesse. Le monde assiste aujourd'hui au concert guerrier que joue Netanyahu sur l'esplanade construite pour fêter la paix entre les différents peuples de la région.

Suhail Al Sweis

Sommet arabe

Les Arabes affichent une solidarité retrouvée

En déclarant souhaiter se réunir à nouveau si Israël ne respecte pas ses engagements, les Etats arabes se sont montrés au sommet du Caire déterminés à être solidaires. Trois analystes politiques reviennent sur ce sommet.

La conclusion essentielle que l'on peut tirer du 22ème sommet arabe qui s'est tenu à la fin du mois de juin au Caire est la décision prise par les Etats arabes de coopérer à nouveau.

Cette rencontre avait un caractère extraordinaire car le concept de solidarité entre les pays arabes souffre depuis longtemps de divisions.

«Le sommet ne s'est pas tenu uniquement pour des objectifs arabes. Il a eu lieu en réaction à l'élection de Benjamin Netanyahu», explique Husni al Shuhab, deux fois député et professeur au département de sciences politiques à l'Université de Jordanie.

Effrayés par l'avenir, les régimes arabes ont surmonté toutes leurs disputes et leurs différences pour pouvoir parler et tenter de retrouver une unité dans les conditions actuelles. «Pour éviter», comme l'ex-

plique Husni al Shuhab «de se retrouver dans une rue sans issue».

«Les Etats arabes ont senti le danger qui s'approchait avec l'arrivée au pouvoir du Likoud», analyse Ghazi al Saadi, expert en politique israélienne et membre de l'Autorité nationale palestinienne. «Ils ont soudainement pris conscience du rôle israélien dans le monde arabe. A cela s'est ajoutée la menace que représente l'alliance militaire israélo-turque.»

Ce sommet a été initié par des pays qui ont manifesté leur envie de se réconcilier et d'harmoniser les relations arabes pour pouvoir faire face aux défis à venir.

Pour Husni al Shuhab, «c'est plutôt un nouveau moyen de se voir la face. Ce sommet clôturait la satisfaction des Américains, en leur assurant d'une façon unanime que les Arabes sont toujours pour la paix placée sous leur bénédiction.»

Ce sommet auquel 13 chefs d'Etat et 21 pays arabes ont participé, a été perçu comme un grand succès. «Avec un seul regret. Qu'un pays puissant comme l'Irak n'ait pas eu l'opportunité d'y prendre part», remarque Ibrahim Iz el Din, ex-vice Premier ministre. «Mais à part ça, le fait que beaucoup de pays soient représentés par leurs présidents ou leur roi a permis à ce sommet d'avoir un poids important.»

Si la Ligue arabe avait organisé ce sommet, l'Irak y aurait probablement participé. Le fait de ne pas avoir invité ce pays reflète la volonté arabe de se plier au nouveau système mondial et à ses exigences. «De toute façon, l'Irak ne parvient pas à se plier aux exigences israélo-américaines qui dominent en ce moment», soupire Husni al Shuhab.

Ghazi al Saadi, de son côté, voit cette absence comme un sacrifice avant pour but de sauver l'unité arabe lors du sommet. «Le choix était simple: soit l'Irak était invité et une grande partie des pays arabes ne venait pas, soit l'Irak ne venait pas et on pouvait compter sur la présence de tous les pays arabes. On a opté pour la deuxième possibilité.»

Le sommet a abordé avec succès des sujets arabes préoccupants. Un des résultats clairs est la volonté de tous de poursuivre le processus de paix et d'en faire la ligne de conduite d'un nouveau système moyen-oriental. Encore une fois, les pays arabes ont posé comme condition le retrait israélien des

territoires occupés en 1967, dont la partie arabe de Jérusalem fait partie. Pour poursuivre la paix, il incombe aux Israéliens de se conformer aux résolutions 242, 338, 425 de l'Onu et au principe de l'échange de la terre contre la paix. «Le point le plus important de ce sommet est le fait d'avoir décidé de se rencontrer encore une fois au cas où Israël ne respecte pas ses engagements», estime Ghazi al Saadi. «On a donné à Israël un délai pour tenir ses promesses.»

«Les pays arabes ont laissé la porte ouverte aux Israéliens», explique Ibrahim Iz el Din. «Et la dernière rencontre du 7 à Lyon en France a aussi rappelé à Israël la nécessité de poursuivre l'application des accords signés.»

Le communiqué final du sommet aborde les sujets majeurs affectant les pays arabes en trouvant des solutions raisonnables pour chaque régime. «Le communiqué est équilibré pour toutes les parties», commente Ibrahim Iz el Din. «Il n'a pris aucune position pour ou contre un régime arabe et s'est attaché à traiter les problèmes de chaque pays.»

La sécurité, évidemment, a été au centre des débats. Chaque pays doit pouvoir être souverain sur sa terre, sans craindre l'intervention d'un autre. A cet égard, les problèmes de souveraineté entre Bahreïn et l'Iran, les Emirats Arabes unis et l'Iran, le Yémen et l'Erythrée ont été clairement abordés pendant le sommet. «Il y a des conflits tout au long de



A l'occasion du sommet arabe du Caire, les relations entre le roi Hussein et Hafez al-Assad se sont réchauffées.

L'Histoire entre les pays arabes», explique Iz el Din. «Alors ce qui arrive à présent par exemple entre le Bahreïn et l'Iran n'est pas nouveau. D'ailleurs Farouk al-Choreh, ministre syrien des affaires étrangères, a déjà commencé juste après le sommet une tournée pour se rendre en Iran puis au Bahreïn pour régler ce problème.»

Ce point de vue optimiste est nécessaire en ce moment pour arriver à un Moyen-Orient «calme et paisible». Cependant, une alliance régionale liée à la Syrie avec l'Iran, «c'est une alliance qui contribue à créer des

rivalités entre les Etats arabes eux-mêmes», explique Husni al Shuhab. «L'Iran, de toute manière, ne parviendra jamais à inverser le processus de paix. Mais c'est un bon partenaire pour la Syrie.»

Il est indispensable pour les Arabes de maintenir des discussions avec le nouveau gouvernement de la Turquie pour effacer les problèmes. Ghazi al Saadi estime que l'accord israélo-russe peut être un danger. «La Turquie est toujours de connaitre la gloire de l'Empire Ottoman et se sentira menacée par l'Iran. Israël a aussi ses rêves et les deux se sont mis d'accord

pour réaliser leur but». Enfin, les Etats arabes sont tous d'accord pour poursuivre les négociations jusqu'à ce que la paix règne dans la région. «La Jordanie», explique Husni al Shuhab, «a déjà parcouru tout le chemin de paix avec Israël. Les autres veulent en faire de même et Israël le sait. C'est donc une question de temps pour les Israéliens qu'ils doivent se plier aux accords qu'ils ont signés, alors que les Arabes doivent eux prendre en compte les réalités.»

Oroub el Abed

De meilleures relations entre la Syrie et la Jordanie

Les relations entre la Jordanie et la Syrie continuent de se réchauffer après le sommet arabe du Caire. Lundi, le roi Hussein et le président syrien Hafez al-Assad ont eu un entretien téléphonique, passant «en revue la situation dans la région, notamment les développements du processus de paix».

Ce contact découle de la rencontre le 22 juin dernier au Caire entre les deux hommes. Depuis le mois de mai 1994, Hafez al-Assad et le roi Hussein ne s'étaient pas rencontrés. Au début du mois dernier, le roi Hussein avait affirmé que des organisations palestiniennes radicales basées à Damas tentent de déstabiliser la Jordanie en y introduisant des explosifs pour commettre des attentats contre des Jordaniens et des touristes israéliens.

Institut du monde arabe

La Jordanie accueille le monde arabe

Pour préparer la saison jordanienne culturelle qui doit avoir lieu l'année prochaine à Paris, le président de l'Institut du monde arabe, Camille Cabana, était en Jordanie cette semaine, où il a notamment rencontré le roi Hussein.

Pour Camille Cabana, président depuis novembre 1995 de l'Institut du monde arabe (Ima), le temps était précieux en Jordanie. En à peine deux jours, il avait en effet pour but de rencontrer beaucoup de personnalités jordanienues, telles que le ministre du Tourisme et des Antiquités, et voulait voir certaines pièces qui effectueraient le voyage en France pour différentes expositions.

Il a de plus dû glisser dans son agenda un rendez-vous qu'il espérait, mais dont il n'était pas sûr jusqu'au dernier moment: un entretien avec le roi. Finalement, c'est à Akaba qu'il a rencontré le souverain hachémite. «Le roi a été particulièrement attentif à propos de tout ce que j'ai pu lui dire au sujet de l'Institut du monde arabe. Il m'a promis son aide, tant en ce qui concerne la Jordanie proprement dite, que l'aide qu'il pourrait m'apporter auprès de certains Etats partenaires.»

Créé en 1987, l'Institut du monde arabe compte 21 pays partenaires, à savoir l'ensemble des membres de la Ligue arabe plus la France. La France se charge théoriquement de financer 40% de son budget, les Etats arabes devant eux payer 60%.

Mais comme beaucoup de grands organismes internationaux, l'Ima connaît quelques mauvais payeurs qui ne versent pas leurs cotisations. «Ce n'est absolument pas le cas de la Jordanie», précise Camille Cabana, «que je qualifie de très bon élève de la classe.»

En choisissant de placer la Jordanie en tête de la liste des pays partenaires à qui il doit rendre visite, Camille Cabana a tenu à souligner «la grande vo-

lonté de coopération de la Jordanie à l'égard de l'Ima».

Le but de cet institut est, selon Camille Cabana, «d'ouvrir pour un rapprochement et une meilleure compréhension du monde arabe et du monde occidental». Une mission qui revêt bien sûr un caractère politique. «L'Ima est appelé à jouer un rôle politique, même s'il emprunte les chemins de la culture.»

Longtemps adjoint de Jacques Chirac à la mairie de Paris, Camille Cabana ne peut que se réjouir de la relance de la politique arabe de la France. «Nous n'avons pas vocation à aborder de manière directe les problèmes purement politiques. Mais nous pouvons, sous l'angle de la civilisation ou de la culture, valoriser les thèmes qui rassemblent. Et Dieu sait qu'au niveau historique et archéologique, les facteurs qui rapprochent sont beaucoup plus nombreux dans cette région que ceux qui divisent.»

L'exposition que l'Ima a consacrée à la Syrie en 1994 illustre d'ailleurs pour lui parfaitement cette démarche. «A cette époque, la Syrie avait en Occident une image assez détestable. Or, cette exposition a connu une affluence considérable: 400 000 personnes. C'est un chiffre qu'on atteint à peine avec une exposition de prestige à Paris consacrée à Van Gogh ou à Vermeer. Et les autorités syriennes nous ont ensuite dit que dans les mois qui ont suivi cette exposition, les flux touristiques en provenance de la France avaient été multipliés par trois ou quatre.»

Emissaire de Jacques Chirac

En sus de ses fonctions de président de l'Ima, Camille Cabana se fait parfois l'émissaire du président de la République. A l'occasion de sa rencontre avec le roi Hussein, il a d'ailleurs remis un message personnel du président de la République. «Si il a bien sûr abordé la situa-



Camille Cabana a été nommé à la tête de l'Institut du monde arabe au mois de novembre dernier.

tion politique de la région avec le souverain hachémite. Camille Cabana n'a pas perdu de vue l'autre volet de sa mission qui était la préparation de la saison jordanienne qui aura lieu l'année prochaine à Paris. Trois manifestations importantes auront lieu: une exposition d'arts plastiques d'artistes jordanienues contemporains à l'Hôtel de ville de Paris, une manifestation à caractère culturel et commercial dans le grand magasin Le Printemps (artisanat et produits locaux) et une exposition sur l'archéologie jordanienne à l'Ima. «Nous nous intéressons tout à

la fois les images de cette archéologie jordanienne exceptionnelle et les technologies de pointe qui ont permis de la traiter et de l'approcher. Nous aurons donc à la fois un pied dans un passé lointain et un pied dans le futur.»

Auparavant, seuls l'Egypte la Syrie avaient eu droit à une telle manifestation à caractère national. Un signe supplémentaire, selon Camille Cabana, de «l'attachement que porte la France à la Jordanie».

Olivier Bras

C'est la vie

L'agenda français d'Amman

Vidéo

La révolution française vue par les cinéastes étrangers. Danton, de A. Wejda avec Gérard Depardieu. Le 8 juillet à 20h00 au Centre culturel français.

Expo-photo

«Heureux dimanche» 35 tirages noir et blanc illustrent un demi-siècle (1913-1966) de loisirs, de plaisirs et de divertissements vus par des photographes inscrits dans le mouvement humaniste (Denise Colomb, Marcel Bovis,...). Jusqu'au 20 juillet au Centre culturel français.



Peinture

L'enfance de Nouri al Rawi

Dans ses tableaux, le peintre irakien Nouri al Rawi s'inspire de ses souvenirs d'enfance. Un passé lointain qui plonge le visiteur dans une atmosphère calme et irréelle.

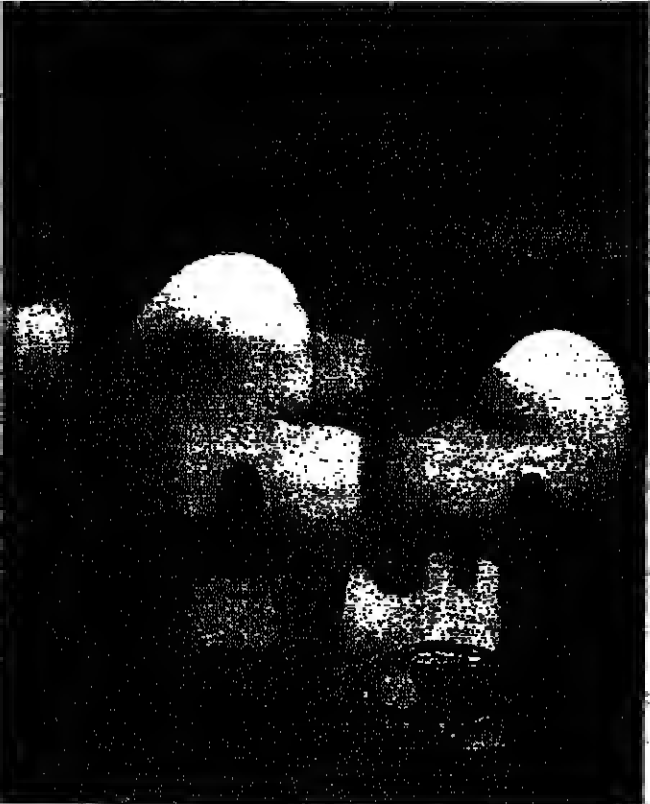
Un silence imperturbable, des villages endormis, abandonnés aux maisons de plâtre blanc, des moulins à eau, et l'Euphrate, présent dans tous les tableaux. Nouri al Rawi crée son univers comme il le voit en rêve, inspiré par les villages irakiens de son enfance de Rawa et Ana.

D'une voix douce, le peintre retrace ses souvenirs et ses rêves. «Je suis né dans une famille nombreuse qui travaillait la terre, à la frontière irako-soudanaise. C'était un endroit magnifique entre l'Euphrate et la montagne. J'allais toujours m'évader dans la montagne pour contempler le village de loin et l'imaginer comme un tableau, comme j'aurais rêvé qu'il soit. Aujourd'hui, mon rêve est devenu réalité. C'est là-bas que mes souvenirs se sont fixés et que mes impressions visuelles se sont fixées.»

C'est son enfance, la nature et la femme qui l'inspirent le plus. «Pour moi la femme est sacrée. C'est le symbole de la vie, c'est la mère, la sœur et l'amanie.»

Cet Irakien d'une nature calme et sensible, âgé d'environ 70 ans, n'est pas simplement peintre. Il est aussi poète et écrivain.

A l'âge de dix ans, il commençait à peindre. Il part ensuite étudier les Beaux-Arts à Bagdad, puis en Yougoslavie et au Portugal. Il occupe plusieurs fonctions importantes au sein



d'organisations d'artistes irakiens et a dirigé un temps le Musée national d'art moderne de Bagdad. Il a publié sept livres sur l'art entre 1962 et 1976 et rédige aujourd'hui son autobiographie. Ses peintures ont été exposées dans beaucoup de pays arabes et en Europe.

Il régit dans ses tableaux un calme profond, sans même la présence d'un humain. Cela crée une atmosphère unique, une sorte de mélodie intérieure. La peinture de Nouri al Rawi respire une harmonie musicale et poétique.

Devant ses tableaux, on se sent pris d'une nostalgie pour ces villages endormis, bien que l'on y soit jamais allé et que l'on ignore même où ils se trouvent.

Quatre teintes dominent la plupart des tableaux: le blanc, le bleu, le vert et une touche de rouge. «Les couleurs sont des sentiments et des révélations. Je les choisis spontanément», explique Nouri al Rawi. «Je ne copie pas les couleurs que je vois mais je m'inspire de celles que j'ai en tête. Si je ne sais pas à l'aise avec des couleurs, je passe des heures à les travailler jusqu'à ce que je trouve

une correspondance entre la toile et l'image que je cherche à réaliser.»

Nouri al Rawi ne se contente pas d'utiliser la peinture à l'huile. Il fait aussi des collages à partir de papiers, de broderies ou de journaux. Il joue avec les épaisseurs pour créer des reliefs, de la profondeur et donner du rythme à ses compositions.

Ne s'inscrivant dans aucune mouvance artistique, il poursuit son itinéraire seul. «J'ai mon style propre. Je ne ressemble à aucun artiste. L'artiste moderne s'est libéré de toutes les contraintes culturelles. Chacun doit laisser libre cours à son inventivité pour développer son style personnel au lieu de s'accrocher au style des autres.»

Il vous reste une semaine pour entrer dans l'univers particulier de Nouri al Rawi, dont les œuvres sont exposées à la galerie Orfali. Ne cherchez aucun message dans ses tableaux, mais simplement un style et des rêves sortant de l'enfance du peintre.

Mona Qaddoum

Orfali Gallery. Tel: 826932

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THE STAR'S

COMPUTING & HIGH TECH

Edited by Zeid Nasser

The Internet and commercial on-line services: The ever blurring line of distinction

By Jawad Abbassi
Special to The Star

THERE WERE times when the Internet and the commercial on-line services were exotic concepts to us in Jordan. worthy of Churchill's famous description of Russia: "wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma".

These "dark ages" are gone. Jordanians are taking confident steps towards utilizing the Internet and its functionality in business and leisure.

Yet, as a result of our previous isolation from the Internet, Jordanians still mix between the once very distinct notions of the Internet itself, and commercial on-line service.

Prior to the 1993 introduction of the attractive World Wide Web on the Internet, the Internet was the exclusive domain of research students and academic centers.

For entertainment and attractive services, home users and businesses used commercial on-line services such as America On Line (AOL), Prodigy and CompuServe.

Such on-line services, compared to which the local NETS and Access services are minute models, differed from the Internet in three important ways:

First, unlike the Internet, they were run by commercial companies that owned every single piece of hardware their subscri-

ers used—the Internet by contrast is a collection of computer networks owned by a multitude of parties. Second, they usually had centralized computer servers containing their information and services, connected with many Points of Presence—places with communication hardware and modems for users to connect

over the family and business markets until the advent of the Web which dramatically changed their fortunes. The new attractive look of the Internet lurked in many home users and businesses, who also appreciated the usually cheaper connection rates. Under such pressure, commercial on-line services quickly

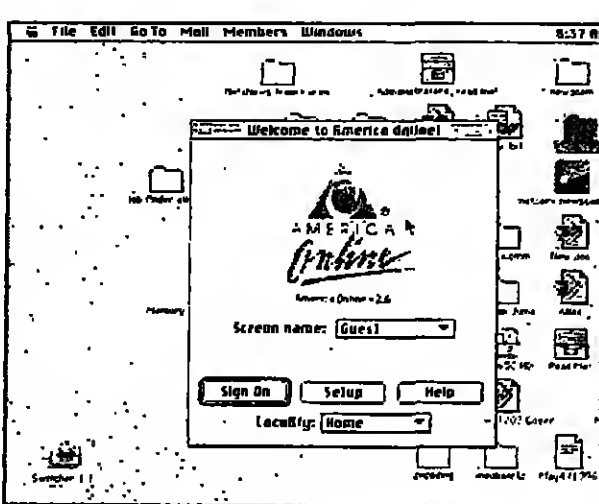
adopted the strategy of modifying their software to allow for browsing of the Web. CompuServe and Prodigy went as far as announcing a complete shift towards HTML, the Web's standard format. This decision came out of necessity; no matter how hard these on-line services try, the exponentially increasing web content—its

more and more information is put on it—means that they can't continue to neglect it.

This led to the current situation when users of, say, AOL can enjoy AOL's interface and special features while in the same time browse the web at their will. Thus, blurring the distinction between the commercial on-line services and the Internet and resulting in increased usage of both the web and commercial on-line services. Ideally, a subscriber to AOL dials up a Point of Presence belonging to AOL.

locally. So, a user of America On Line (AOL), for instance, would connect with a Point of Presence in London that would allow him/her to utilize AOL's computer servers in the US. Third, these on-line services utilized their own proprietary software that gave their service a distinctive "feel". The Internet, on the other hand, supports open standards which many software applications can use.

So, commercial on-line services enjoyed pervasive control



The opening screen of America On-Line

Bierhoff: The man with the "golden goal" leads Germany to victory

LONDON—Oliver Bierhoff created soccer history on Sunday when he scored the first international "golden goal" to lead Germany to a record third European title with a 2-1 win over the Czech Republic.

Bierhoff's sudden-death winning goal in the fifth minute of extra time came under new rules and brought the match to an immediate finish, banishing the prospect of another penalty shoot-out.

Bierhoff, who replaced Mehmet Scholl after 69 minutes, had been on the pitch for only four minutes when he headed Germany's equaliser in the 73rd minute.

The Czechs had taken the lead in the 59th minute when Patrik Berger fired home a penalty which went under the body of Germany goalkeeper Andreas Koepcke.

Television replays showed that the foul, committed by Berger's Borussia Dortmund team mate Matthias Sammer on Karel Poborsky, was just outside the penalty area.

An intriguing match swung first Germany's way and then the Czechs until Bierhoff struck in extra time, firing left-footed past Czech goalkeeper Petr Kouba.

He got both hands to the ball but failed to stop it squeezing out of his grasp and into the net off his left-hand post.

The German players began celebrating the moment the ball went in but confusion reigned briefly.

One of the linesmen had his flag up and the Czech players persuaded referee Pierluigi Pairetto to go over and talk to him.

In a scene reminiscent of the confusion that surrounded England's third goal in the 1966 World Cup against West Germany, when a Geoff Hurst shot hit the bar and bounced down on the line, Pairetto and his linesman consulted for a few moments before the referee pointed to the centre circle, signalling the goal.

It was then the Czech players knew their impossible task was over and the Germans' celebrations began in earnest.

After the Czechs collected their losers' medals from Queen Elizabeth, she presented the Henri Delaunay trophy to German captain Jurgen Klinsmann.

He had made a remarkable recovery from a calf injury to play in the final.

Germany came into the match without the suspended Thomas Moeller and Stefan Reute.

But boosted by the return of Klinsmann, he had missed the semifinal against England after being injured in the quarter-finals against Croatia.

Berli Vogts' squad was also so depleted by injuries that only eight players were fit enough to train on Friday.

But Germany made light of their behind-the-scenes problems, forcing four corners in the opening seven minutes.

Although none of them came to anything, the Germans maintained the upper hand during the opening stages. But gradually the Czechs, boosted by the return of three players from sus-

pension, began making serious inroads in the German defence.

Prompted by Berger and Jiri Nemec, they created a series of chances for the impressive Poborsky and Pavel Kuka who had a golden opportunity of his own to put the Czechs ahead after 42 minutes.

Dieter Eilts, one of the outstanding players in the tournament, lost the ball to Kuka just inside his own half and the Kaiserlautern player ran half the length of the pitch only to see his clipped shot saved by Koepcke.

On the stroke of halftime Eilts collided with Nemec, tore ligaments in his left knee and did not re-appear after the break.

Four German players—Thomas Hassler, Thomas Helmer, Sammer and Klinsmann—were in the team beaten in the 1992 European championship final by Denmark and must have felt history was about to repeat itself midway through the second half.

The Czechs, ranked as 150-1 outsiders to lift the title after losing 2-0 to Germany in their opening match of the tournament, were suddenly ahead.

Although Sammer's foul on the flying Poborsky was just outside the area, its nature prob-

ably warranted a penalty. Berger was lucky to score with a powerful left-footed shot which went under Koepcke's diving body.

But as they had done against England in the semifinals, the Germans levelled quickly. Christian Ziege's accurate free-kick wide on the right found the unmarked Bierhoff in space and he made no mistake with his powerful close-range header.

Ziege, impressive on both the left and right, and Sammer began hitting long balls over the Czech defence for Klinsmann and Bierhoff to chase.

With just a minute of normal time remaining, Czech substitute Vladimir Smicer, who went back to Prague to get married on Friday, almost sealed the game for the underdogs.

He ended a powerful run with a well-struck shot which Koepcke did well to tip around the post.

Five minutes later it was all over. Bierhoff's winner giving Germany the title for the third time following victories in 1972 and 1980.

His "golden goal" also avenged West Germany's loss to Czechoslovakia in the 1976 European final in Belgrade.

Another view on Web publishing costs

AS PART of The Star's efforts to present different views on the topics discussed in the Workstation page, here is an analytical view presented by a reader, regarding Mr Jawad Abbassi's article on 'Cyber-perspectives on Old Paper Cost Issues' published in The Star's issue, dated 20 June, 1996.

I really admired the attempt of Mr Abbassi to add an economic perspective to electronic publishing issues. Unfortunately, the article may have a serious flaw in its economic analysis.

Mr Abbassi argues that the new world of Internet publishing has abolished the costs of classical publishing. He stretches the argument to make it look like all costs have been abolished. Thus, totally neglecting the other costs associated with Web publishing.

First of all, we have to realize that only a relatively small percentage of people have moved into Web publishing. So, any of the benefits that Mr Abbassi has mentioned are yet to be realized in the long run. It is true that packaging and shipping costs are eliminated with Web publishing, but there is a whole range of other costs that are ignored.

There are the costs of acquiring content, the cost of creating

content, and shipping costs are replaced by a continuous need to upgrade the network and acquire more bandwidth. The congestion of the Information Super Highway is already posing a problem that many telecommunication companies are trying to solve. A look at issues of BusinessWeek in the last month would introduce you to many useful examples. As publishers move more to Web publishing, this congestion will be a bigger problem. Solving it would require added costs.

Mr Abbassi also mentioned a very interesting topic, it concerns distributing software—he is really talking about Applets and Java.

Realizing cost items in this case is very tricky, since it would look as if the only cost that companies have to incur is that of developing software and then, as more users rent or buy the software, the average cost will decline even further until it reaches zero in infinity, which is exactly what increasing returns to scale mean. That could be a very interesting theoretical argument, but it is also very tricky. In this case, what Mr Abbassi did not realize is that the cost of bandwidth, and upgrading the network to support an ever increasing number of users, replaces the traditional

costs of shipping and delivery.

There is also the cost of supporting the new users and training them. Of course, that cost would still be less than the costs of traditional publishing, but it is still there. There is also the cost of maintaining the network elements, which in developed countries could reach beyond \$10,000 for network servers and \$8,000 for desktop computers.

This cost will even increase as more users shift to multimedia use. One last element is the short product cycle of programs.

The constant need to upgrade and improve software implies a hidden cost element. Software does not stay in the market long enough to realize a substantial decline in average cost.

So, in the case of Web publishing, we are dealing with only a shift in the cost structure. In theoretical terms, Mr Abbassi implied that the cost curve has been out in half. In reality, what happened is a downward shift in the cost curve. That is my answer to Mr Abbassi's article. Hopefully, it will correct any inaccurate perceptions that Mr Abbassi's article may have created.

Jabra F. Ghneim, Consultant & Economic Analyst

News update

Silicon Graphics completes its merger with Cray Research

● Silicon Graphics, Inc. (SGI) has announced the completion of its merger with Cray Research Inc., creating the world's leading high-performance computing company. In April 1996, Silicon Graphics acquired 75 percent of the outstanding shares of Cray Research.

Cray Research, now a wholly owned subsidiary of Silicon Graphics, will continue to focus on providing large-scale super-computer systems and services to government, industry and academia.

Robert H. Ewald, president and chief operating officer of Cray Research Inc., since December 1994, will head up the new subsidiary.

Silicon Graphics Inc. is a leading manufacturer of high-performance and commercial computing systems. The company delivers interactive three-dimensional graphics, digital media and symmetric

multiprocessing super-computing technologies to technical and commercial environments through direct and indirect sales channels.

Sinam appointed as IPC distributor in Jordan

● Sinam Integrated Systems (SIS) has recently been appointed as the distributor for IPC products in Jordan.

IPC, a manufacturer of personal computers based in Singapore, provides a comprehensive line of computers that cater for home and corporate users. The home line focuses on multimedia features that offer 'edu-tainment' at a reasonable cost.

Over the last couple of years, IPC products have been strongly promoted in the different markets of the Middle East, and the appointment of Sinam in Jordan resembles the company's commitment to introduce its products to the growing local market.

For more information on IPC products in Jordan, contact Sinam Integrated Systems at telephone 682251.



Golden goal adds extra glitter to Euro 96 crown

LONDON—What a fine way that was to settle a championship.

The golden goal finally made its debut when Oliver Bierhoff scored to give Germany a 2-1 win over the Czech Republic in Sunday's European Championship soccer final. It is a welcome addition to the sport.

Bierhoff's sudden-death goal came five minutes after the Germans and Czechs had started playing extra time. Under the old rules, the two teams would have continued playing for another 25 minutes, and if the Czechs had scored to tie it, the title would have been decided on penalty kicks.

Too many great players had disappointing performances for this to be called a great tournament. From the quarterfinals on, five of seven matches went to extra time, and that underlines the absence of a truly powerful team. But at least the tournament ended dramatically and pleasingly.

The 1994 World Cup, a superb event, will be remembered by many for the frustration of seeing one of the greatest prizes in world sport given away on the result of a penalty shootout. Penalties certainly furnish a powerful ending.

The tension was unbearable Wednesday when Germany and England engaged in a shootout for the right to advance to Sunday's final. When Gareth Southgate missed England's sixth kick, supporters moved to the edge of celebration throughout Germany and its sister country for a day—Scotland, Andy

Moeller's subsequent game-winning kick will earn him everlasting fame in Germany and on the Tartan Army home page. It was exciting, but it was a lottery.

Sunday's conclusion was real soccer. Bierhoff had come on as a substitute in the second half, and his unopposed run to the far post to connect with a Christian Ziege free kick was almost as perfect as the header with which he scored. He did just as well on the winning goal.

It was Bierhoff who outjumped Czech defender Karel Rada to win a long clearance and set up German possession just outside the Czech penalty box. A minute later, he had the ball and did well to hold off Rada. He turned and shot in the blink of an eye, and although the ball might have taken a slight deflection, it was a whole lot better than playing on and perhaps having to resort to penalties.

FIFA, the world body that governs soccer, has shown a refreshing willingness during the 1990s to make subtle changes to the rules. Goalkeepers no longer are permitted to handle passes kicked back from teammates. The offside rule was changed slightly to favor attackers. Tackling from behind was outlawed.

The golden goal failed to settle four previous extra times: opponents seemed as cautious as ever. But if it can save just one game from going to a penalty shootout, then it is well worthwhile. Let's hope FIFA continues to have a

sensible and open mind.

Suggestions earlier this year about enlarging the size of the goals thankfully were laughed out of consideration, but there are other experiments going on that are worthy of full-fledged adoption.

In the United States, several leagues are keeping time the way it should be kept in the computer age, on the stadium scoreboard. It is profoundly silly that in major events such as the World Cup and European Championship, with hundreds of millions watching, only the referee knows exactly when a game will end and exactly how much time has been added for various stoppages.

FIFA recently gave greater responsibility to the fourth official, and working with an official timekeeper is where they can be most useful.

Watching last-second flurries while an official clock counts down to zero really adds to the game.

A bit more radical but no less interesting is the kick-in, currently being tried in the United States of Independent Soccer Leagues in the United States, and in the second division in Belgium. The idea is this: When a team is in the attacking third of the field, about 35 yards from the goal, it has the option of kicking rather than throwing the ball back into play. Kick-ins are deadly in the USISL, where some of the pitches are barely 60 yards wide, 20 yards below the international standard.

But kick-ins would add to the game at the highest level, too.

